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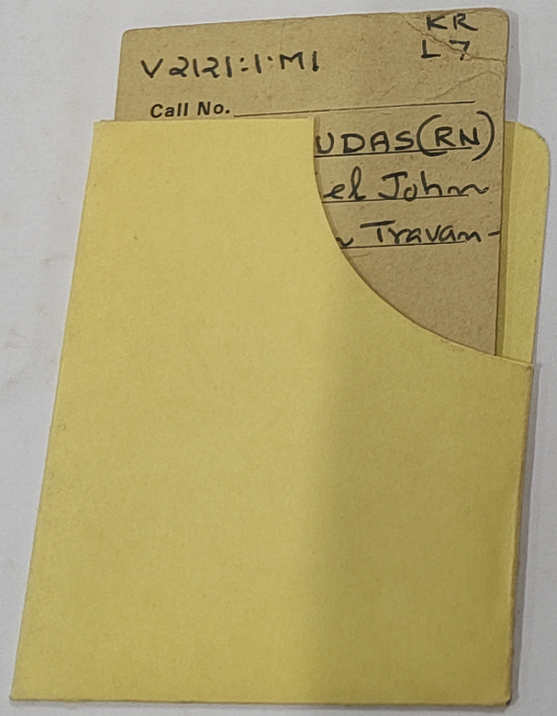

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COLONEL JOHN MUNRO IN TRAVANCORE

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A People's Revolt in Travancore.

British Policy in Travancore 1805–1859.

REFERENCE

COLONEL JOHN MUNRO IN TRAVANCORE

DR. R. N. YESUDAS

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First Published 1977

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Published by
Kerala Historical Society, Trivandrum.

Printed at
The St. Joseph's Press, Trivandrum.

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To

Rev. S. M. LEISTER

167519

PREFACE

Colonel John Munro's was a remarkably imposing personality on the Kerala stage in the second decade of the nineteenth century. He dominated the affairs of Travancore in such a way that as British Resident from 1810 to 1819 and as Dewan he ruled like a king, commanding respect of all sections of the people. As a social reformer his name will ever be remembered in Travancore and Cochin. He helped to accelerate the dissolution of the old feudal order obtaining in Travancore and for the emergence of a new society out of the decadent. He won the confidence of the unprivileged people and became their spokesman. To them he was the new Moses with the tablets of the new law, a figure of great moral force. This book is primarily a study of the reforms he introduced in Travancore in different fields and his efforts to modernise that state.

An enquiry into the career and achievements of Munro in Travancore is indispensable for having a thorough understanding of the history of modern Kerala. The reforms of Munro in Travancore are not altogether unknown to writers on Kerala history, some of whom do refer to him in their works. But his achievements as a distinguished social reformer, who had heralded a new society, liberal, humanist and equalitarian, in a benighted state, and as an enlightened administrator and a lover of Travancore have never been before subjected to close study and analysis.

This study is based on primary sources collected from the following archives and repositories of books and journals: National Archives of India, New Delhi; Tamilnad Archives, Madras; Church History Archives, Bangalore, and Kerala University Library and State Central Library, Trivandrum. My sincere thanks are due to the staff of these institutions, for their unfailing courtesy and assistance extended to me.

In the preparation of this book, my indebtedness to Dr. T. K. Ravindran, Professor and Head of the Department of History and Editor, Journal of Indian History, University of Kerala, for his very keen interest and constant help is, indeed, too deep for words.

I am thankful to my wife Dr. Santha for her loving co-operation and encouragement. She read through the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions. I am thankful to all my friends who have directly or indirectly helped me in the venture.

To,

Dr. R. N. Yesudas

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COLONEL JOHN MUNRO IN TRAVANCORE

Colonel John Munro had the distinction of being the most loved and venerated of the British Residents in Travancore. The reason for that love, and veneration lies in his reformist policies and humanitarian activities in a period of great political and social tension. His idealism, his resourcefulness, his championing the cause of the common man and his extreme resentment against the privileges enjoyed by a few feudal barons, earned for him the respect and adoration of the great majority of the people.[1] He performed the arduous task of raising Travancore from the state of declension into which it had sunk and established the fame and authority of the British. As the Resident and Dewan of Travancore, he brought peace and prosperity, and introduced a progressive government, which helped her attain eminence and popularity. He started a reformation in the ideals and administration which earned for him the people's gratitude. The imperishable name he left in their hearts for justice and probity made even the ignorant peasant call him 'Munrole Sāhib'.[2]

It was in the year 1810 that Col. Munro took up office as British Resident in the Court of the Rāja of Travancore. He was expected to render yeoman service to the cause of the consolidation of British power in Travancore and this was expressed by A. Falconer, the Chief Secretary to the Madras Government, in his letter to Col. Munro informing him of his appointment as Resident on 23 March 1810: "The nature of the past transactions and the existing state of affairs in that quarter render the situation of the Resident in the Court of Travancore in a high degree important, difficult and delicate, and His Lordship in Council is satisfied that, in selecting an officer possessing all the requ-

1 Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi to Colonel Munro, the Resident, dated 26 Tye 992 M. E. (January, 1817). For Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 106–11.

2 V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, vol. I, p. 467. The common people speak of Munro as ' Munrole Sāhib ' with respect, in Malayāḷam.

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isite qualifications for an office so arduous, he fully provides for the public interests in confiding his trust to you."[3] Within a few years he had by cautious, enlightened, intelligent, and liberal policies thrust Travancore on a new course. His period was one of great activity and progress to which the people trace the origin of everything good in the state and considered it the golden age of Travancore.[4]

When Munro came to Travancore in October 1810, he found the Mahārāja Bālarāma Varma, a weak ruler, overshadowed by Ummiṇi Tampi, who had been appointed Dewan on 15 March 1810. He saw that the country was in a state of extreme anarchy and confusion. No progress had been made nor any disposition manifested to secure by a system of economy and retrenchment the means of retrieving the Rāja's affairs.[5] The state had to pay a heavy debt to the Company toward the expenses incurred by the military operations of the Madras Government consequent on the insurrection of Vēlu Tampi in 1808–9. Besides even the annual subsidy due to the Company had fallen into arrears.[6] The Dewan, Ummiṇi Tampi, failed to adopt measures for tiding over the crisis and the immediate interference of the paramount power was becoming increasingly imperative.[7] At this juncture the Rāja Bālarāma Varma died on 7 November, 1810, which ushered in a new change.[8] An enlight-

3 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, "Colonel Munro" *Kerala Society Papers*, vol. II, Series 7, (November, 1931), p. 41.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*,(Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 16 August 1832) VI–political, p. 275.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 275–76.

7 *Ibid.* This fact and the evils that prevailed in Travancore, when Rāma Varma was the ruler, were noticed by Nanoo Pillay, a Dewan in the second half of the nineteenth century : "The Maharajah Rama Varma was the ruler : Ommany Thumby who had been appointed as Dewan in March 1809, the Premier. Corruption, abuse of power and irregularities pervaded the whole service. The country was deep in debt. The service was starved and subsidy to the Hon'ble East India Company fell greatly in arrears owing to serious financial embarrassments. Anarchy and maladministration were the order of the day. The Minister's predominant passion was ambition which influenced him to a degree that he almost usurped the Rajah's power. The inability of the ruling power so to administer the state as to avert financial difficulty in payment of subsidy was so far as to evoke the threats of the Paramount Power that it would assume the direct management of the country for the security of the funds destined to such subsidy." K. R. Elenketh (ed.) *Dewan Nanoo Pillai, His Select Writings and Letters*, p. 121.

8 Lts. Ward and Conner, *Geographical and Statistical Memoir of the Survey of the Travancore and Cochin States*, From July 1816 to the end of the year 1820, vol. I, p. 95.

ened, intelligent and able Rāṇi succeeded the dead king. Though young she possessed a cultivated mind, was gifted with a sound judgement, had sagacity to discern what was good for her kingdom and to adopt such measures as were calculated for its improvement. She commenced her glorious reign in a manner quite different from her predecessor.[9] She declared her perfect reliance on and respect toward the Company and placed herself under the guidance and support of it 'whose bosom had been an asylum for the protection of an infant like Travancore since the time Sri Padmanabha Swami had effected an alliance with such a respectable Company of the European nation".[10] She entrusted everything connected with Travancore into the hands of Munro and called him her elder brother,[11] which changed the course of the history of Travancore.

After her ascension to the throne she wanted to dispense with the services of Ummiṇi Tampi, the Dewan "whose incapacity and vices brought the affairs of the country to the greatest disorder and confusion, and had destroyed and ruined the inhabitants by his injustice and extortions."[12] She wrote a letter to the Resident censuring the Dewan: "The Dewan appointed for the affairs of the country should in all his proceedings manifest attachment to the Rajah, to me, and to the people—but he acts contrary to this principle—in a manner calculated to inspire fear and distrust both in my mind and among the people. On this account it is incumbent on the Company to sanction such an arrangement as may conduce to my satisfaction, and to the prosperity of the country."[13] She complained to the Resident that the Dewan was endeavouring to excite disorders and troubles. She sent a letter on 15 April 1811 requesting the Resident to protect and help her. She concluded the letter evoking sympathy, thus : "As I am a woman, it is not becoming to write more: but I earnestly trust that my wishes may be taken into serious consideration, and the present Dewan may be removed from office."[14] Munro felt that the removal of Ummiṇi

9 P. Shungoony Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 363.

10 Memorandum delivered by the Principal Tampurāṭṭy to the Resident,For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 10 January 1815, Sl. No. 377, No. 6, FF. 128–29.

11 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Quilon, 12 October 1812. *Ibid.*, FF. 128–29.

12 Rāṇi Lakshmi Bāyi to Col. Munro. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 104.

13 Memorandum delivered by the Principal Tampurāṭṭy to the Resident. *Ibid.*, 10 January 1815, No. 6, F. 129.

14 Rāṇi Lakshmi Bāyi to the Resident dated 6 April 1811. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1812, No. 16, FF. 87–88.

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Tampi was essential to the restoration of order and improvement of the state. Therefore he took steps to that end. With the approval of the Madras Government, the Dewan was relieved from office. The Rāṇi then requested Munro to assume charge of the administration and conduct the duties of the Dewan along with that of the Resident.

Munro found no person qualified for the office of Dewan in the state. The British Government repeatedly declared their anxiety to rescue Travancore from the difficulties in which it was involved, and to maintain the integrity, independence and dignity of the state as a British ally. Munro was sincerely solicitous to second these benevolent views.[15] Therefore he found nothing unjust in assuming the powers of Dewan, and he thought of using that power to conduct the affairs of Travancore to the object of promoting in common with the interests of England, the permanent prosperity and happiness of the people of Travancore.[16] Likewise, the arrangement announced by the Supreme Government of assuming the entire management of the revenues and administration of the country was to him a harsh and severe step considering the interests of Travancore and England and wanted to avoid it. "It appeared to my judgement that the temporary employment of the Resident as Dewan was the most efficacious and unobjectionable measure that would be adopted for that purpose. It would combine the requisite degree of authority in the executive administration with the preservation of the general form of the Government, and the power and dignity of the Rajah, and could be discontinued at once when the objects of its adoption had been fulfilled."[17] The persuasions of the Rāṇi went beyond all expectations. She had stated in her letter to Munro, requesting to assume the administration, that, there was no person in Travancore that she wished to elevate to the office of Dewan; and that her own wishes were that the Resident should superintend the affairs of the country as she had a degree of confidence in his justice, judgment and integrity, which she could not place in the conduct of any other person. She added that she regarded the Resident as her brother and was convinced that the Resident should always act for the good of herself and her people.[18] There was no alternative for Munro except

15 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 31 ; Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi to the Resident dated 26 Tye 992 (1817). *Ibid.*, F. 106.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*, FF. 31–32.

18 Document XIII, *KSP*, vol. II, series, 7 (November, 1931) p. 69 ; V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 485.

to take the entire administration of Travancore on his shoulders. In the words of Munro: "I know no person in the country qualified for the situation of Dewan, and the history of the transactions in Travancore for the last ten years would not admit of my placing much confidence in the conduct of any Dewan that might be nominated to office, for of two Dewans appointed by the British influence during that period of time, one was guilty of open rebellion against its authority; and the other of numerous instances of mismanagement and oppression. It appears therefore to be desirable that the office of Dewan should de discontinued, and that the Resident should superintend the administration of affairs if that measure should be agreeable to the wishes of Her Highness the Rani and of the people. I had the best reasons for knowing that the measure would be highly acceptable to Her Highness, and to a great majority of the people; and its adoption was further recommended by a variety of considerations drawn from the past history and actual situation of Travancore. The history of this country exhibits a course of low intrigues, a jealous policy which could not be effectually suppressed under the administration of a Dewan; and which might not only influence the Rajah's conduct, but foster a spirit of turbulence and faction in the country. The administration of Travancore has been capricious, oppressive and cruel and could not be radically corrected while it remained in the hands of a person located under its operation, and familiarised to its vices. The situation of the country full of abuses, would be ameliorated, the attachment of the people secured, and future commotions prevented by the justice, moderation and humanity of an authority possessing the confidence of the Rani and acting under the immediate direction of the British Government. The introduction of this arrangement so conducive in my judgement to the future prosperity of Travancore was facilitated by existing circumstances for the evils long suffered under the Dewans, and a general aversion to the administration of Ummini Tampi rendered the people desirous of being placed under the protection of British Justice."[19] The combination of the powers of Resident and Dewan in Col. Munro gave him a free hand to use his sharp-edged zeal for social reform which was very much needed in Travancore.

A very keen observer of men and things, Col. Munro studied the character of the people of Travancore and formed his own opinion about them. It was in no way a favourable one; at the same time it was injurious to Travancore's prestige and dignity to a very great extent. The undisputed success of Munro in Travancore lay in his correct under-

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 458–59.

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standing of the people and affairs of the state. To him the people were "destitute of truth and honesty, so abandoned to vice and corruption."[20] The views expressed by Resident Macaulay about the people of Travancore attracted Munro, and he agreed with his conclusions: "The duplicity and corruption so prevalent in Native Durbars and among a certain class of the Natives of India in every part of the Peninsula have not escaped the indignant notice and reprobation of moralists and statesmen, but in no part of the world perhaps can there be found men to whose habits and affections the practice of vice through all its debasing, loathsome and hideous gradations seems so familiar and dear as to the Natives of Travancore. This may in some degree be ascribed to the perverted system of their domestic relations under which the whole circle of the social charities and of the parental ties and affections that in other countries connect and unite neighbours with neighbour, parent with child and children with their parents have in Travancore no existence, neither a habitation nor a name."[21] The picture drawn by Orme, the great historian who was born in this state and possessed a great knowledge of the people is also not different from that of Macaulay. He says: "It is a remark warranted by constant observation that, wherever the Government administered by Gentoos, the people are subject to more and severer oppressions than when ruled by the Moors–avarice is his–the Gentoos–predominant passion, and all the evils, cunning and perseverance of which he is so exquisite a master are exerted to the utmost in fulfilling the details of this vice, and his religion instead of inspiring frees him from the remorse of his crimes, for whilst he is harassing and plundering his people by the most cruel oppressions he is making peace with his gods, by denying nothing to their priests."[22] Munro found that the picture of Travancore presented by Macaulay and Orme was not an exaggerated one. Munro thought it his duty to change this set up, which came into being as a result of long course of internal misrule and agitation and continued alternations of sanguinary and unqualified tyranny on the part of the sovereign and of turbulence, treachery and revolt on that of the people.[23] He stepped into the arena to lay the foundation of a modern Travancore,

20 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Quilon, 14 October 1814. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 10 January 1815, Sl. No. 377, No. 7

21 *Ibid.*

22 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 22–23.

23 *Ibid.*, FF. 21–22.

entirely different from that of the past, with a correct understanding and proper assessment of the character, manners, the history and problems of the people.

The savage idea of suppression did not appeal to Munro. He approached problems in a very liberal, enlightened and humanitarian manner: "The principle of my proceedings was to conciliate both the Rajah and the people, and this could be accomplished only by conferring benefits on them. To please the Rajah it was necessary that his authority, dignity and revenues should be maintained unimpaired, and especially that the burdens of the country should be speedily removed; and to please the people it was requisite that the oppressions, the onerous imposts, and ruinous monopolies under which they laboured should be abolished, measures which would ofcourse decrease the revenues, and paying the means of debt."[24] But it was not an easy task for him to attain all that was in his mind. He was confronted with a government which was feudal in character and outline. It was not of the people by the people and for the people, but of the privileged, for the privileged and by the privileged. The Rāja contended himself mainly with the protection of the kingdom from external enemies, while real power was shared among a number of petty chiefs. The supreme feudal lord was the Rāja, whose authority was limited and controlled by the feudal aristocracy.[25] Their power consisted in the number of their followers and dependents who were at their reach always.[26] In the old feudal days, the political and social powers were blended and chieftaincy was the symbol of this combined authority. The chieftains exercised such power that they could give life or death. People paid dearly for their delinquencies. On the slightest provocation and often at the despotic whim of those in authority they were decapitulated.[27] The feudal chieftains who were mostly Nairs[28] had separate estates

24 *Ibid.*, FF. 35–36.

25 Early in the history of Travancore, we see, the Yogakkar (Corporation) of the temple of Padmanābha Swāmi and the Eṭṭuviṭṭil Piḷḷamār or chieftains of the eight houses keeping the authority of the Rāja in check. These Eṭṭuvīṭṭil Piḷḷamār were originally the heads of the local Nair Taṛa organization of the 'Six hundred' who were charged with the maintenance of the rights of all classes and with preventing any such from falling into disuse. The Rājas tried for a long time to gain ascendancy and to keep in subordination these Nairs, but with little success. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, *History of Kerala* (Ernakulam, 1924), vol. I, p. 256.

26 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 95.

27 T. K. Gopala Panikkar, *Malabar and its Folk* (Natesan & Co., Madras, 1900), p. 100.

28 The Nairs formed the dominant caste of Kerala. Armed at all times with swords, bows or spears, they acted as guards for the king and other great lords

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and rights set apart for them by their feudal lords in return for services they were obliged to render the latter when required. "The chiefs held their lands on feudal tenure undertaking to follow their liegelords at the head of their man to defend them whenever necessary. The whole Nayar community formed the militia of the land, liable to be called for active service by the feudal chiefs at any moment. There were no standing armies then".[29] This reservation of rights, privileges and liabilities made the feudal chieftains big land lords invested with powers of oppression and domination in the country. Thus through the powers which they wielded as landlords, the chieftains managed to indulge in an effective exercise of an unquestioned social supremacy inside their feudal jurisdiction; so that one is tempted irresistibly to reflect upon the likelihood of safety remaining for such downtrodden people if the sceptre of political authority were also wielded by such despots.[30] The powers of feudal chieftains penetrated even in the personal matters of individuals. The people belonging to lower classes were not allowed to raise their buildings beyond the first floor, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of their chieftains. Certain kinds of conveyances such as the palanquins and dholies were exclusively reserved for the carriage of feudal heads or chieftains.[31] The power of the sword and the severe exactions often made the people turbulent, but the governmental authority was over and above them which suppressed their plans and movements.[32] There was insecurity of person and property. The cry of the people was not as regards equality of rights and representative institutions, but for the preservation of the most fundamental elements for human existence—life and property.

in times of peace. They served their lords loyally and lived at the lord's expense. People in general held them in high esteem as warriors. The Nairs believed that they were not permitted to marry, rear families, or control property because such duties might interfere with their devotion to the military life. They lived in their own villages in seclusion from other groups. Nair women were free to accept Brahmins as their lovers. The Nairs were depicted as being even more afraid of staining their nobility by association with lower castes than were the Brahmins. Business transactions between Nairs and the lower castes were conducted through intermediaries to avoid pollution. In their role as warriors they were kept on the king's list throughout their lives. A Nair was never imprisoned or fettered for his crimes. M. L. Dames (trans. and ed.) *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, vol. II, pp. 36, 38 ; E. K. Gough—Aberle, " Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change among the Nayars of Malabar." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society*, LXXXII, (1952), p. 76 ; K. M. Panikkar, " Some Aspects of Nayar Life " *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, XLVIII (1918), pp. 289–91.

29 K. P. Padmanabha Menon, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 263.
30 T. K. Gopala Panikkar, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
31 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
32 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

Conservatism and tyranny penetrated into every atom of public life and the officials were supreme in making and enforcing laws. The king absorbed in sensual pleasures, was generally held under his thumb by the Dewan, who was the head of the administration.[33] He exercised a supreme civil and military authority. The state was divided into three principal divisions, each of which was governed by an officer called *valiya sarvādhikāryakkār*. Each principal division was subdivided into three or four subordinate divisions which were managed by officers called *sarvādhikāryakkārs*. The subordinate divisions were divided into a certain number of inferior districts termed *maṇḍapattumvātukkals* managed by *kāryakkārs*. Each *maṇḍapattumvātil* contained from seven to ten smaller divisions called *provertis* which were superintendend by officers called *proverttikkārs* in some parts of the country and *adhikāries* in others. Every *provertti* was subdivided into *dēśams* or *muries* under officers called *mūlakkārs*. A *dēśam* contained from 57 to 400 inhabitants and was again formed into smaller divisions under the direction of officers whose names vary very much.[34] From the Dewan to the superintendent of a few houses, there was an uninterrupted chain of authorities, subordinate in the strictest sense to their respective superiors and exercising all the powers of the sovereignty, for they were not only charged with the revenue assessments, the administration of justice, the chastisement of offenders, but also with the command of the militia and defence of the country. The whole arrangement was calculated to obtain the complete command over the persons and property of the people; nor could any system of rule be better adapted for the purposes of extortion and oppression, throughout all their ramifications.[35] Munro says: "The severe and oppressive character of the Government appears to have arisen as much from the confederacy and bold iniquity of the public servants as from the tyranny of the Rajah. The officers were organized more on principles of military subordination than of civil polity, and were able with impunity to defraud their sovereign and to oppress his subjects.[36] They "oppressed the people, embezzled the collections, and disobeyed orders, the people paid the revenue only by

33 *Ibid.*
34 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 0, F. 37 ; Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Paḍanilam, 26 July 1811. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1812, FF. 256–57.
35 Walter Hamilton, *The East India Gazetteer*, vol. II, (2nd ed.) p. 762.
36 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, p. 278.

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compulsion, condemned their superiors, and began to form and even to execute fresh plans of commotion and insurrection."[37]

The *kāryakkārs* were the most cruel and severe among the officers and they formed the back bone of this system of government. They were fiscal, magisterial, judicial and military officers who exercised vast powers and that combination of powers was considered necessary for the maintenance of the feudal system unimpaired. They maintained a system of unqualified, ferocious and intolerable tyranny.[38] They were respectable in appearance and address, "but never almost has the wrath of heaven visited a country with such a force as was inflicted upon Travancore by the cruelty, tyranny and rapacity of these men."[39] The strict gradation of authority established among the *kāryakkārs* and the entire command which they possessed over the services of the people contributed to perpetuate military feelings in the country and facilitate the means of commotion and insurrection. They were, in fact, at once military and civil governors exercising absolute power in their districts. The investiture of their office was given by the Rāja with a sword, and this weapon, together with the ensigns of their office, were carefully displayed wherever they appeared. The unlimited powers exercised by the *kāryakkārs* were abused in their capacity of revenue servants. The constant and authoritative intercourse which they established with the people, touching their property and interests, gave an infinite influence for them and they used it for the purpose of corruption and injustice. The authority of the *kāryakkārs* enabled them to prosecute the system of rapine, fraud and coercion.[40] There was nothing remained to prevent the undue exercise of the powers of the *kāryakkārs*. The gradation of rank among them offered considerable obstacles to the efficient execution of their duties. An order disagreeable to the *kāryakkārs* was seldom enforced: it was sent from the *valiya sarvādhikāryakkārs* with a private intimation to disobey it, and it was conveyed from the *sarvadhikāryakkārs* to the *kāryakkārs* and from the *kāryakkārs* to *provertikkārs* with a similar request. If called to account, these officers asserted that they had transmitted the order, and laid the blame of disobedience on their inferiors, and it was difficult to examine 200 or 300 *proverttikkārs*. But any order favourable to the feelings or wishes of the *kāryakkārs* was carried into effect with the promptitude of military constitution, without laws, sanction and discipline which prevented it from degenerating into anarchy and misrule.[41] Every *kāryakkār* had a treasury and money was spent at his will without any consideration for the welfare of the people.[42]

37 Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 26.
38 *Ibid.*, F. 78.
39 *Ibid.*
40 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, VI, p. 278.

On the part of the people complaint was useless, redress hopeless: they had only one remedy and that was bribery. This practice was widely prevalent, and it was one of the melancholy circumstances in the situation of the people that one of the greatest evils was necessarily resorted to as good, to mitigate the still more intolerable grievances of injustice and oppression. Innocence was protected, justice obtained and rights secured by bribes.[43] On appointment to office, custom familiarized the practice of presenting an offering of money, a courteous bribery repeated annually on certain festivals. These dutiful offerings with which all titled and privileged persons, as well as public servants, conciliated the good graces of the chief, bore the designation of *ādhikāri*.[44] The officers mainly depended for their luxurious living upon unjust exactions, for the large part of their salary was paid to their superior officers for their favour. Much of the revenue was intercepted in its way to the treasury, but the rapacity practised in its collection was a more serious evil for which however remonstrance or remedy were almost equally hopeless, as enchased among guards and attendants, the chiefmen could not be approached without a bribe, in every instance an indispensable introduction to business with the whole chain of secondary authorities who united by a similarity of views were stigmatized by the same want of principle, which spread its depraving influence through the body of the people, placed at their mercy: the arts of fraud being naturally opposed to the power of oppression.[45] Attached to the

41 *Ibid.*, p. 279.
42 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 74.
43 From antiquity the rulers of Kerala and South India were interested in accepting bribes and taking money illegally. This fact was noticed by foreign travellers. Ships which came ashore were captured by the chieftain of the locality. Marco Polo wrote respecting the kingdom of Eli: "And you must know that if any ship enters their estuary, and anchors there, having been bound for some other part, they seize her and plunder the cargo. For they say you were bound for somewhere else, and it is God who has sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods ;...and they think it no sin to act thus. And this naughty custom prevails all over those provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by stress of weather into some other port than that to which it was bound, it is sure to be plundered." Henry Yule (Ed)., *The Book of Marco Polo*, vol. II, p. 374.
44 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 96.
45 *Ibid.*

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kāryakkārs there was a regular gradation of accountants who managed the revenue accounts and in general surpassed even the *kāryakkārs* in extortion and plunder.[46] "There is scarcely a single public servant in the country" Munro notes, "who has not occasionally employed the public money for his own use". He continues: "Bribery and extortion prevailed in all parts: every officer of the Government had the authority to impose fines on the people at his pleasure. The property of the inhabitants was considered to belong to the Rajah on their death, and was only redeemed by very oppressive fines".[47] All administrative proceedings were kept secret; but the magic wand of a bribe had the power to open any file: "It formed part of the system of concealment in Travancore for the officers of Government to transact all business in retired apartments, the outer doors being kept shut and opened only to a bribe".[48] This prevalence of bribery made every officer rich, who endeavoured to have a secret hoard of money, as the best protection of his liberty, property and life.[49]

The great ambition and aim of Munro when he assumed the charge of administration in June 1811, in accordance with the wishes of the Rāṇi was to establish the government on a "solid basis of order, justice moderation and good Government" and give protection of life and property to all classes of the people.[50] He wanted to correct the abuses and weed out corruption from the service. To remove the serious obstacles opposed to the attainment of those salutary ends, by corruption, abuses, and radical and accumulated evils which pervaded every department of the state, required the formation of a more enlightened equitable and vigorous system of administration than had appeared for some time in that state. Munro defined his policy in the following words: "A severe and oppressive system of Government in Travancore had nearly destroyed the sources of its prosperity, and had imposed upon its habitants a character of immorality, idleness, deceit and turbulence which rendered them equally dangerous to their own Rajahs

46 V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 461.

47 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, VI, p. 276.

48 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 77.

49 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, VI, p. 276.

50 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818,No.20, F. 30.

and to the British power. Their history for many years exhibits a series of insurrections and crimes. The reformation of these evils has been a primary object of my policy."[51] With these objects in view he put an end to the division of power which had existed in the country from very early times. He built up a centralised form of administration conducted by the Dewan from headquarters with the co–operation of a staff of assistants of whom the most important were two Dewan *pēṣkārs* newly created.[52] The arrangements that were adopted for the improvement of administration by Munro, were more or less on the lines of those which prevailed in the British presidency of Madras. He reformed and reorganised every department of the state, the most important of which were the *Huzūr Kaccēri*, the revenue, the financial, the treasury, the judicial, the police and the military.

The *Huzūr* or the Dewan's office, the chief controlling executive office, had been functioning for upwards of three quarters of a century when Col. Munro began to preside over it. It came down as a legacy of the olden times with its primitive organization. It contained no departmental division of labour. The staff of the Dewan were 'jacks of all trades'. They collectively superintended everything, while individually responsible to none. Col. Munro found it expedient that the several branches of the government should be formed into separate dapartments, constituted on a system and superintended by persons that would both secure the active discharge of the duties annexed to these departments and render them in some measure checks upon each other.[53] For the due fulfilment of each day's work in the several departments of the Dewan's office, the Resident established a routine which operated as a further check upon all departmental heads. He ruled that all letters to the Dewan's office should be addressed to the Resident and that all letters or orders issued by it should be written in his name and bear his signature. Letters received after being read to the Resident were sent to the respective departments on which answers under the orders of the Resident were prepared and brought to him for signature. This mode of correspondence was found absolutely necessary, for the authorities in the provinces were so fond of indirect channels of communication that they seldom addressed their letters to the Resident, and the servants of the office were eager to give them-

51 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Quilon, 12 October 1812. *Ibid.*, 10 January 1815, Sl. No. 377, F. 120.

52 V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 379.

53 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Padanilam, 26 July 1811. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 24 July 1812, No. 24, FF. 265–66.

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selves importance and perhaps to accomplish other views by being allowed to communicate orders in the Resident's name.[54] The correspondence with the several authorities in the provinces on matters not appertaining to the departments was conducted by the Resident himself through the agency of an office called the *rāyasam* department. An important policy which Col. Munro pursued was to make the transaction of business both at the *Huzur* and subordinate offices as open and public as possible. Men of all parties were appointed to prevent their being united by a common interest and to check upon the proceedings of the authorities acting under the Resident.[55]

To remove the confusion in the administrative system, Munro abolished the offices of *valiya sarvādhikāryakkār* and *sarvādhikāryakkār*. The *kāryakkārs* were deprived of all civil and criminal authority over the people and reduced them to the position of mere revenue collectors. Their designation of *kāryakkār* was changed into *Tahśīldār*. Munro says: "A Karigar under the title of Tahsildar, has been retained at the head of every mundaputwasil or district, with an accountant denominated sumpreddy pillah, and having a certain number of proworteecars under him. This plan admits of no evasion in complying with orders; and the duties of Tahsildars being confined to the collection of the land revenue, are executed with more efficiency. The influence of names is considerable, and the discontinuance of the title of Karigars will be attended with advantage".[56] Thus Munro separated the revenue department from the judiciary in Travancore with commendable courage.

Munro also separated financial department from the *Huzur*. The former was invested with the functions of maintaining a correct account of all the receipts and disbursements, of examining and checking the expenditure of subordinate officers, and of preparing reports on the resources and expenditure of the state. He created the posts of a superintendent and a deputy superintendent of finances and ordered that no payments should be made from the treasury without due authority and sanction, that bills for all payments with the exception of a few fixed charges should be prepared in the finance department, certified by the signature of the superintendent and countersigned by himself and that no disbursements should be made from the treasury except on the

54 *Ibid.*, FF. 266–67.

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, VI, p. 279.

authority of such bills. The superintendent of finances had to submit fortnightly reports to the Rāṇi, showing in detail the money transactions, the amounts paid and the balance due to the Company.[57]

An arrangement was established for the formation of the public treasury into distinct department. There were a large number of treasuries in Travancore, and every pagoda and office of revenue had a separate treasury for the receipt and disbursement of money. This system generated confusion in the accounts, furnished the public servants with great facilities for embezzlement who used the public money for their own good. To prevent the evils Munro abolished the unwanted treasuries, discouraged the issue of money except for urgent services in the provinces and directed all the collections to be sent to the *Huzur Kaccēri* at which accurate accounts were kept. This department was placed under a man of respectable character named Cidambaram Piḷḷai. He was ordered not to issue money without bills signed by the superintendent of the finance department and counter-signed by the Resident to keep accurate accounts of all issues and receipts. The superintendent of the treasury was also given powers to refuse payment of a bill in cases of doubt or claims of improper nature, even though they were signed by superintendent of the finance department and the Resident.[58] A jamabundi committee was also organized. Thus every possible loop-hole for leakage of revenue was effectively closed.

Col. Munro found that the police force of Travancore was not discharging its duties properly. He was convinced that an efficient police establishment was essentially necessary for the good government of the country.[59] Two battalions of Nair sepoys and one company of cavalry were organized by him as 'body guard and escort to royalty.' European officers were appointed to head the force. The police duties which had till then been discharged by the military were entrusted to a separate police corps, independent of both the judicial and revenue departments and working directly under the orders of the Dewan.[60] The *kāryakkārs* were prohibited from levying fines or inflicting other punishments at their own discretion on the accused persons and from keeping persons in confinement under their own custody. There came

57 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated 26 July 1811. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 24 July 1812, FF. 237–41.

58 *Ibid.*, FF. 241–46.

59 *Ibid.*, FF. 249–50.

60 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 57.

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to prevail a spirit of rivalry between the *kāryakkārs* and the police officers which operated as a safeguard against the police confining innocent persons and extorting money from the people under the pretext of apprehending smugglers or detecting crimes.[61] The duty of the police *daroghas* and *tana naicks* consisted in the prevention and suppression of offences, investigation of crimes, and in charging culprits before duly constituted courts. The police were also to execute the decrees of the courts, and apprehend the revenue defaulters on the requisition of the tahsildar or other government servants.[62] Munro employed the police profitably to prevent contraband trade which was greatly detrimental to the revenues. Ward and Conner describe the police establishment in the following words: "A corps of six to eight hundred men, composed principally of the natives of the other coast, forms the Police—a completely civil establishment, which under the immediate control of the Dewan executes all services connected with the internal tranquillity of the country. A Naick and ten peons are stationed at the Cutcherry of each District...The pay of the peons perhaps may be considered too small; this is a cause and perhaps believed an excuse for their committing petty aggressions on the ryots, in which the timid and passive disposition of the lower classes greatly encourage them."[63] The police successfully performed all duties connected with the internal security and peace of the country.[64] In this respect, Munro can be called the father of modern police system in the country.

The powers of the feudal chieftains formed a bar to the progress of Travancore. Munro was not reluctant even to use extreme methods to suppress the authority and associations of local feudal chieftains, who

61 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Paḍanilam, 26 July 1811. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1812, FF. 255–57.

62 Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 102.

63 *Ibid.* According to T. K. Velu Pillai, the reform introduced by Munro was to a certain extent successful. There were, however, certain serious defects which called for improvement.

1. The police was undisciplined and untrained and not properly supervised or controlled.
2. Their remuneration was not adequate to attract the best men available.
3. The personal morale of the force was extremely unsatisfactory.
4. The force, such as it was, instead being concentrated upon its legitimate work as a police force, was scattered throughout the state. T. K. Velu Pillai, *Travancore State Manual*, vol. IV, pp. 106–7.

64 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George ,dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, F. 57.

exercised undisputed sway over the people.[65] Their arrogance and the domineering and bullying spirit, with their inborn hatred and overbearing manners toward the lower classes irritated Munro. He was averse to give undue prominence to any one class over the other. The *piḍākaikkārs* or village leaders of South Travancore exercised more authority over the southern districts than the government itself, and their council, known as the National Council of the Piḍākaikkars, proved rather a scourge and a curse than a blessing. The council met once a year at Śucīndram to deliberate on the deeper matters concerning the privileges of their caste and religion and those of others. They enquired whether all the individuals of their caste and other castes had duly observed their respective caste customs and manners, and whether any one class had deviated, from its customs and usages. If the council discovered that any individual violated or trespassed his caste rules and limits, it took the law into its own hands and brought him to judgement and carried-out everything in a high handed manner. There were instances in which even capital punishment was inflicted by this council. They were a terror to the country and often made the rulers to submit to their desires. To avoid their displeasure, many state affairs were consulted with them. Very often they marched in grand processions with drums sounding in front and led by the *piḍākai* representatives, each holding a staff in his hands and followed by hundreds of *piḷḷamārs* or hereditary clerks and accountants holding their caste banners, medals and different emblematic staffs. The people were to bow and worship these senators when they marched through the country in this fashion. Whenever they wanted to see the Rāja and discuss with him on matters connected with the state, they marched in the same dreadful fashion. One day when Munro was staying at Udayagiri fort this council with all their paraphernalia marched in a grand fashion and entered the fort without his permission. When they had all entered the fort Munro ordered his escort to fall upon them and seize all their paraphernalia and break all their drums and staffs. The *piḍākaikkārs* were made prisoners and fettered. Thus was destroyed a feudal assembly which acted as a supreme court judging the manners and usages, habits and customs of the different classes of people for a very long time. He abolished this assembly and other village assemblies and caste assemblies.[66] This measure proved a great blessing to the state and the people.

The first and foremost duty of a government is the proper administration of justice, but the measures pursued for that great end in

65 Appointment of Pidakaikkar. Nittu vol. 34, No. 359, F. 311.

66 C. M. Agur, *Church History of Travancore*, pp. 569–71.

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Travancore till the beginning of the nineteenth century were unequal to its attainment. The government and laws of Travancore, which were under the uninterrupted sway of Hindu rulers, were closely modelled after the *Dharma Śāstras*. The Rāja was the recognised fountain of law and justice But he seldom appeared in public and the administration of the law was entrusted to a staff of revenue, magisterial and judicial officers of the state. There were no regularly constituted courts in Travancore. All civil matters were heard and decided by the *sarvādhikāryakkārs* or by Panchayats appointed by the Rāja or his minister. Their decisions were reported to the Dewan on whose sanction alone the decrees could be executed. In criminal and police matters local officers made investigations and reported the result to the Dewan who alone had the authority to pass sentence. [67] "The Dewan was almost equally inaccessible to complainants: he usually sat in a deep recess in the midst of sepoys and public servants: persons of inferior caste could scarcely approach him at all, and those permitted to come nearer, were obliged to manifest every appearance of respect and awe, and always to offer a present of money". [68] According to the Brahmanical sacred writings the killing of a cow was capital and trial by ordeal was sanctioned,[69] as also other practices equally extravagant and absurd, while the punishments decreed were various, cruel, often ludicrous and in reality inflicted according to the caprice of the Dewan and his subordinate officers.[69(a)] The punishments were varied according to the caste and social position of the offender. The Brahmins and the Nairs,

67 V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 545.

68 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort, St. George dated, Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 38.

69 Jacob Canter Visscher gives an account of different such trials. He says : "The extraordinary oaths which are taken in important causes, are very perilous, and resemble the trials by ordeal used formerly in Europe in the superstitious ages. When a man is charged with a heavy crime, which cannot be proved, or which he will not confess, a tisal or pan containing coconut oil is brought and heated in the presence of the Rajah and his courtiers and Brahmins ; the accused is then asked whether he will confess the deed, and ; if he refuses, he raises his eyes to heaven, imploring the protection of the gods in the defence of his righteous cause, and then plunging his thumb and two first fingers into the boiling oil he pulls out a ring placed at the bottom of the pan. This being done, a pandit or physician comes and binds up the three fingers with pisang leaves, which must be left on them for three days : if at the end of this time the flesh where the skin has been burnt off is whole, he is pronounced innocent, but if black, he is punished as a perjured man.... " For details regarding the different kinds of trials see Jacob Canter Visscher, *Letters from Malabar*, pp. 67–72.

69(a) Walter Hamilton, *East India Gazetteer*, vol. II. p. 672.

the privileged classes of Travancore, were exempted from punishments, no matter what crime they committed. [70] Severe punishments were inflicted on the lower classes even for slight faults. Mutilation of limbs were common, and nose and ears were cut off for committing crimes. This was noticed by Ibn Batuta, who visited Kerala in the fourteenth century A. D. "They put a thief to death for stealing a single nut, or even a grain of seed of any fruit; hence thieves are unknown among them, and should anything fall from a tree none except its proper owner would attempt to touch it". [71] The examination of witnesses and of the accused was conducted *viva voce*, and was not reduced to writing. The lower classes were not allowed to enter the courts and seek justice in a just manner. [72] If complaints were admitted, they were not heard properly and redressed. Kuñcādi ca Piḷḷai says: "If the ryots having suffered great oppression from the inferior Circar servants went to complain of them to the district karigars they were obliged always to offer a present on being admitted to state their grievance and as the subordinate officers were generally the friends and relations of the Kariagars he after some days sent them back with a useless message to the persons of whom they had complained. If they went to the Moghum [73] Survaddy Kariagar they were obliged also to offer a present to him and as he pretended to believe the truth of the representations which he had received on the subject of their complaint from his subordinate Kariagars, he generally manifested extreme displeasure against the complainants and rejected their complaints desiring them to go back to the Kariagar, who would enquire into them. If they went to the Wallee Survaddy Kariagar with their remon-

70 M. L. Dames (trans. and ed.), *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, vol. II, p. 31.

71 K. P. Padmanabha Menon, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 284. Faria Y Souza says: " The Nairs show no mercy to a thief though the thing stolen be of no value. They impale the criminal, and leave him to be eaten by the birds. An Indian that had turned a Christian stole a knife, the Nairs apprehended him, and sent to acquaint the judge of the Portuguese at Cannanore. He returned answer, they should kill him. They instantly cut off his head, thinking it was a piece of civility, being he was a Christian, to kill him our way. Our Commander, Nicholas Soveral, sent some soldiers to fetch the body and revenge his death on the Nairs, as if they had not obtained leave for what they did. The soldiers killed a Nair which provoked them in great numbers to besiege the fort with great threats if satisfaction was not given the Nairs. Our commander made show of hanging one of Soveral's servants to appease the Nairs ; and being cut down, put him into a coffin, as if he were really dead. The Nairs were satisfied, and our men as well pleased that this fiction has passed upon them, as if the condescension had not been equal, whether the act was feigned or real." Tom, III, pp. 254–55, in *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 285.

72 Memorial of the Mission of the L.M.S. in Travancore to Sir C.E. Trevelyan, 18 July 1859. *Pol. Proc.*, 1859, vol. III, pp. 128–30.

73 Division.

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strances they were also obliged to offer a suitable present which very few could afford, and were always rejected, menaced with punishment and sent back, so that the people without a prospect of redress from any quarter were obliged to submit in silence and quietness to oppression".[74] In short, the vast majority of the people experienced only injustice and oppression. Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi in her letter to Munro, gives a good account of the condition of the courts that existed in Travancore before the arrival of Munro in the country. "The complaints, the grievances and disputes of the people being heard and settled by the revenue officers were never decided upon justice, but afforded additional means of corruption, bribery and oppression, and as the revenue servants had neither leisure or integrity to perform the duties of judges, the complaints of people increased every day and there was in fact no administration of justice in the country".[75]

The inadequate system of the administration of justice attracted the attention of Munro, who always stood for the welfare of the people. He encouraged the people to take their suits to him for decision. He says: "I heard the complaints of the people every day, and they crowded to me in thousands with representations of the most serious injuries".[76] He had to deal with a large number of cases and he found it difficult to continue the system. The cases referred to the *kāryakkārs* were not properly enquired, and when the grievances were not redressed the complainants returned to Munro for his interference. It was difficult for him to hear all complaints and thought of establishing a sound system for the proper administration of justice free from the interference of *kāryakkārs*.[76] "The complaints preferred to me have become every day numerous, the inhabitants in coming to me for the adjustment of their disputes are unavoidably exposed to great delay and inconveniences and the proceedings of the Karigars on the cases referred to their decision are extremely unsatisfactory."[77] Munro continues to describe the circumstances that made the introduction of a new system for the administration of justice necessary. "The people in coming for the redress of their complaints to the Resident or Her Highness the Rani are subjected to great unavoidable inconveniences and the Karigars and

74 Statement of Kuncadicca Pillai, For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 101.

75 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, F. 53.

76 *Ibid.*, F. 54.

77 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated 10 October 1811. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1812, F. 269.

other Circar authorities are disabled by their avocations from applying a sufficient degree of attention to the investigation and adjustment of complaints — a separate provision for the administration of justice is therefore indispensably requisite, an arrangement which is sanctioned by the Shasters and Hindoo institutions."[78] He was for the introduction of a regular and permanent judicial establishment in the state to administer justice and devised fixed rules for the same.[79] His scheme was approved by the pandits and the Rāṇi. It was decided as follows:

1. That there shall be one principal and five subordinate courts established in Travancore for the cognizance of all matters of a civil and criminal nature, connected with the administration of justice.[80]

2. That the principal court shall consist of the Dewan and three judges of whom two shall be Brahmins and the third a Nair.

3. That each of the subordinate courts shall contain three judges, viz., two Brahmins and the third a Nair.

4. That a *daffadār* and a party of police peons shall be attached to each of the courts.

5. That the subordinate courts shall be stationed and have jurisdiction as follows:– one court at Padmanābhapuram for the administration of justice in the Tōvāḷa and Agastīśvaram divisions, one court at Trivandrum for the Thekkēy and Vaḍakkēy Trivandrum divisions; one court at Māvēlikkara, for Māvēlikkara and Ambalapuḷa divisions: one court at Vaikkam for the Kōṭṭayam and Ettumanūr divisions; and one court at Ālwaye for the Ālaṅṅāṭṭ division.

78 *Ibid.*, F. 304.

79 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 54–55.

80 The first attempt to establish courts on a regular basis was taken by Ummiṇi Thampi, when he was Dewan, following the arrangements in the territories of the Company to impart justice. He established four courts designated insaff kaccēris, and each of them was composed of a Nair judge with an establishment of writers. But no regulations were furnished for the guidance of the courts, no mode was established for the execution of their decrees, the men at their head were accused of ignorance and corruption, the *kāryakkārs* continued to administer justice, the people were at a loss respecting the authorities to which they were to apply for a settlement of their complaints, the sentences of the courts were neither respected or executed, and the institution appeared to be so entirely useless. These factors made Munro abolish the system adopted by Ummiṇi Tampi and adopt a new system. Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Paḍanilam, 26 July 1811. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1812, No. 24, FF. 256–58.

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6. That the subordinate courts shall be charged with the investigation and decision in the first instance of all cases of a civil or criminal nature in the state subject to their jurisdiction and inhabitants of those countries are hereby enjoined to resort to these courts in the first instance for the redress of their complaints.

7. That the law of *Śāstrās* together with the established usage of the country shall constitute the rules for the decision of all cases with such exceptions as are herein or may be hereafter prescribed.

8. That of the crimes declared to be capital by the Hindu laws the following only shall be punished with death.

1 Exciting or committing acts of insurrection and mediating or attempting the death of the Rāja

2 murder, and

3 gang robbery

9, That the following punishments only with the exception specified in the next succeeding paragraph are to be sanctioned by the courts viz; death by hanging, banishment, confiscation of property, imprisonment and labour, whipping and fines.

10. That in matters of caste, religious usage and civil cases it will be competent to the courts to sentence such punishments and pronounce such decrees with the exception of death and the mutilation of limbs or members as may be prescribed by the *Śāstrās* or by the established custom of the country.

11. That the courts shall at their discretion commute the punishments prescribed in the *Śāstrās*.

12. That the trial by ordeal is to be discontinued and that all trials are to be determined by evidence taken upon oath.

13. That the Hindu law in criminal cases, as herein modified, shall apply to all classes of subjects in Travancore, whether Christian, Mussalman, Jew, Parsi etc.

14. That in civil cases, when the parties may both belong to the same religion, the trial shall be determined by the laws and usages of that religion, and, when the parties may belong to different religions, the trial and judgment shall be regulated by the laws and usages of the religion of the defendant.

15. That it shall be the particular duty of the police to apprehend all robbers, murderers, thieves, house-breakers, smugglers or other persons guilty of crimes against the public peace or the security of individuals, that all other government authorities and the inhabitants in general are authorised and enjoined to seize criminals of that description, but in all cases, and by whomsoever apprehended, such criminals must be immediately delivered over to the custody of the police.

16. That the police officers, on apprehending or securing charge of criminals, shall report the circumstance without delay to the Dewan, who will order such of the criminals as it may be necessary to try to be sent with an account of their offences to the *darogha* attached to the subordinate court within whose jurisdiction the offences may have been committed.

17. That the *darogha*, on receiving charge of a prisoner, shall report his name and offence to the court who will make a summary enquiry into the nature of his crime, ascertain the names of witnesses and appoint a day for his trial.

18. That when complaints in civil cases shall be preferred to the courts, summonses shall be immediately issued to the defendants to attend on a particular day, and, if the defendant should not attend at the appointed time, a writing is to be affixed to the court house or some conspicuous place, containing a copy of the summons, and a notice that if the defendant should not appear within a certain time (not less than ten days) the court will proceed to determine the case without the defendant's appearance, and, if the defendant should not attend, within prescribed time, the court shall, on examining the allegations of the plaintiff only and the depositions of the witnesses, decree and give judgment in like manner as if the defendant has appeared and entered into proof.

19. That the court shall issue summonses to such witnesses as may be required to appear before them, transmitting the summons to the police officers of the districts wherein the witnesses may reside and that it shall be the duty of these officers to communicate the summonses to the witnesses and to take the measures for their being duly complied with.

20. That if there should be any reason for apprehending that the witnesses may abscond, the police officers shall take proper securities for their due appearance.

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21. That in cases wherein the evidence of persons not residing within the jurisdiction of a court may be required, the court will transmit the summons to the court within whose jurisdiction the party may reside, and that the latter court shall forward the summons to the police officer, who will take the necessary steps for securing the attendance of the witnesses at the court where their evidence may be wanted.

22. That all complaints preferred to the courts shall be entered in registers and investigated according to the order in which they shall have been entered.

23. That when complaints may be preferred against any of the government authorities for matters connected with the execution of their public duty or for abuse of authority, oppression or acts of injustice, the courts shall examine upon oath the complainants together with their witnesses and shall then without summoning the defendants transmit the proceedings to the principal court by whom they shall be submitted to the Dewan for his directions.

24. That the proceedings of the court shall invariably be conducted in the most open and public manner and that all trials shall be founded upon evidence to be delivered upon oath, and in the presence of the accused parties.

25. That in criminal cases such as murder, robbery, theft etc., the trial shall be conducted and the sentence passed by the court, and that all civil suits and cases shall also be tried and determined by the courts except when either of the parties should apply for an investigation and decision by a panchayat, in which case the court shall refer the suit or cases to the investigation and decision of a panchayat acting upon oath and composed of equal numbers named by the respective parties together with a certain number of persons to be appointed by the courts and their discretion.

26. That in all trials, whether civil or criminal, whether conducted by the courts or by panchayats, a specific charge shall be prepared stating the crime or offence imputed to the accused party, the evidence in support of the prosecution shall be received upon oath, and committed to writing, the evidence for the defence shall be then received and recorded in the same manner, and the decree or sentence of the court or panchayat shall be drawn out stating the decision with a summary account of the grounds upon which it shall have been founded.

27. That all sentences and decrees passed by the subordinate courts excepting in cases of capital punishments or of appeals to the principal court in civil cases, shall be carried into immediate execution in the following manner, viz., in civil cases copies of the decrees shall be furnished to the respective parties and shall also be transmitted to the *kāryakkār* and the police officer of the district wherein the property or subject of the dispute may be situated, and it shall be the duty of the police officer on receiving a communication of such decrees to take measures for enforcing their executions, and in criminal cases the sentence of the courts shall be communicated to the *darōgha* attached to it, who will under the superintendence of the court carry the sentence into execution, unless it shall be of a nature such as banishment or confiscation of property that would require the orders of the Dewan for its execution, in which case the *darōgha* is to report the circumstances to the Dewan and act according to his direction.

28. That sentences of death passed by the subordinate courts shall be forwarded with all the proceedings connected with them to the principal court, that the proceedings and sentences shall be carefully examined by the principal court, and if found correct, shall be forwarded to the Rāja, and the sentences after being confirmed by the Rāja shall be returned to the subordinate courts and transferred by them to their *daroghas* for execution.

29. That in civil cases persons considering themselves aggrieved by the decision of the subordinate courts shall have a right to appeal to the principal court, that on announcing their desire to appeal which must be declared within fifteen days after the passing of the decree, the subordinate courts shall notify the appeal to the principal court, and shall suspend the execution of the decree.

30. That it shall be the duty of the principal court to examine and correct the proceedings of the subordinate courts and to have to hear, try and to determine all appeals from those courts.

31. That copies of the proceedings in all cases tried by the subordinate courts or by panchayats assembled under their authority shall be transmitted to the principal court, that the principal court shall carefully examine these proceedings, shall apprize the subordinate courts of any informalities in them, and shall in cases of great irregularities or manifest injustice, order a fresh trial or a revision of the sentences of the subordinate courts.

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32. That the principal court, on receiving an appeal, shall apprize the subordinate court, from which it may have made of the day appointed for its investigation and that the subordinate court shall issue the necessary summonses for the appearance of the parties and their witnesses before the principal court on the appointed day.

33. That in cases of litigous appeals the principal court shall at its discretion impose suitable fines upon the appellant and order him to pay the costs of the opposite party.

34. That the principal court shall be authorised to try and determine in the first instance such cases, whether civil or criminal as may be referred to the Dewan to its decision. [81]

The Rāṇi felt great satisfaction at the measures adopted by Munro for the speedy decision of the complaints of the people and to impart to them impartial justice. She requested the Resident to appoint proper officers for the courts and cause the suits of the complainants to be decided without delay. [82] The only clause that she was not in favour of was the abolition of the trial by ordeal. In cases of doubts it had been customary formerly to let a party dip his hand in the melted butter or to reeeive melted lead into his hand. The Nambūdiris practised this custom frequently and wanted to maintain it. Whenever a doubt was entertained in their cases the fact was ascertained by letting the party to take his oath by dipping his hand in the melted butter at a holy place called Śucīndram. [83] The Rāṇi wanted to preserve the same rule in the case of the occurrence of similar circumstances. Therefore a clause was inserted to the effect that trial by ordeal might be used in particular cases with the express sanction of the Dewan. [84]

Munro established a court of appeal and five zillah courts, which were subsequently increased to eight, for the trial of offences and for the adjudication of civil claims. [85] The appeal court was established at Trivandrum and was presided over by the Dewan, assisted by three judges. [86] The courts were to enquire into all cases, civil, criminal or police, which were brought before them and report to the Dewan who

81 Proclamation, *Ibid.*, No. 25, FF. 303–23.

82 The Raṇi to the Resident dated 30 Āvaṇy 987 M.E. (1811), *Ibid.*, FF. 296–97

83 *Ibid.*

84 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Paḍanilam, 10 October 1811. *Ibid.*, F. 89.

85 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 53.

86 Documents IV & V. *KSP.*, vol. II, series 7, (November), 1931, pp. 65–66.

passed orders in each case. Two judges assisted by a pandit controlled the zillah courts. A *Huzur* court was also established for the trial and punishment of government servants. [87] Government *vakīls* were attached to all the courts and they served as channels of communication between the executive authority and the courts. They prosecuted all offenders against the government or peace of the country. Thus the government was divided into two great departments under the direct authority of the king, the executive administered by the Dewan and judiciary, superintended by the court of appeal. This system was attended with the best effects, and it was in no respect hostile to the efficient conduct of affairs. [88] The proceedings of the courts were brought to the review of the Resident, which produced commendable results in the decision of cases. The court of appeal directed and superintended the other courts and suits against the government were instituted as in private cases. [89]

"The people received the courts with marked demonstration and joy and crowded to them for justice with an impatience proportionate to the delays and vexations which they had hitherto experienced in seeking it." [90] So wrote Munro in his report relating to the administrative and judicial reforms introduced in Travancore. The courts had given security of person and property, and confidence to the mass of the people. To protect the interests of the Christians and the lower classes and to extend them impartial justice, Christians and missionaries were appointed as judges. "The appointment of a Christian judge," says Munro, "is important to the ends of justice, by its checking the partiality of the Nairs and Brahmins, it is useful in ensuring protection and support before the courts to the Christians, lower classes and is also useful in serving as a channel of direct communication between the courts and the Resident." [91] The Brahmins and Nairs received with satisfaction

87 *Ibid;* Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc. Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 55.

88 *Ibid.*, F. 83. The zillah courts were stationed at the following places : Nagercoil, Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum, Quilon, Mavelikkara, Alleppey, Vaikkam, and Ālwaye. The number of officers for the whole establishment were 8 Nambūdiri or Nair judges, a similar number of Christians as assistant judges, a like number of *śastries*, a number similar of *mutiuddies*, 16 *vakīls*, 76 *pillamārs* or accountants, and 170 peons. They were situated nearly in the centre of their jurisdictions. Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I pp. 100–1.

89 *Ibid.*

90 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. For Pol. Proc., Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 54.

91 *Ibid.*, F. 55.

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the nomination of the Christian judges and hailed their impartiality in the decision of cases.[92] The courts established by Munro functioned very efficiently and this fact was well-attested by Lts. Ward and Conner, who conducted the survey of the Travancore and Cochin states between 1816 and 1820. They write: "The introduction of courts has placed the dispensation of justice on a better footing".[93] The avoidance of delay in the decision of cases conferred important benefits on the people. The advantageous influence of the courts was proved by the diminution of the more serious offences from which it had taken away the chances of impunity. People became enlightened to a high degree that they avoided committing crimes. Punishments were made light by Munro. Penal labour and imprisonment were in most cases the severest punishments inflicted. Death punishment was given only in very serious cases. Minor delinquencies were subjected to stripes and amercement. The barbarous punishment of mutilation had ceased.[94] Caste conferred neither privilege nor impunity except in the case of Brahmins. Munro says: "The courts during the first year of their proceedings sentenced to death several Nairs of high rank for atrocious and cruel murders, which under old system would have passed unnoticed and the sentences were regularly executed."[95] Expatriation was the severest punishment inflicted on the Brahmins. Complaints were received with readiness and the people irrespective of their caste and position enjoyed the right to address them to the Dewan, a privilege they liberally exercised.[96] Thus Munro effected a revolution with regard to the administration of justice in Travancore.

Even the minute points of the state received the care and attention of Munro. There were in Travancore a large number of temples, dedicated to various gods and goddesses.[97] The ceremonies of the important temples were generally performed by the Brahmins.[98] Though

92 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *loc. cit.*, p. 65.

93 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 100.

94 *Ibid.*, pp. 101–2.

95 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818, For. Pol. Proc. Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 56.

96 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 97.

97 According to Conner there were about 22, 900 temples in the state. There were temples of the upper and the lower classes. Above 3,000 temples were for the exclusive worship of superior divinities; among those are Viṣṇu, whose temples are denominated Dēvakṣētram and those of Śiva, known as Śivakṣētram. For details, see *Ibid.*, pp. 90–95.

98 The Brahmins were universally revered among the people. They lived apart from others "in their own houses and cities and acted as clergy in the numberless

the temples possessed large tracts of land and a substantial income from it, the government enjoyed no influence in their affairs. The temples were ill-managed, the revenues from them being in most cases diverted from their proper uses or misappropriated by the trustees for their own private use. The condition of the temples when Munro took charge of the administration of Travancore was miserable. In his own words: "The temples were in ruins, their ceremonies utterly neglected and the Bramins, Nairs, and other officers attached to them not only swallowed up their revenues but sold and alienated their lands... There is scarcely a pagoda in Travancore that has not been repeatedly robbed not only of its revenues, but of its religious ornaments, and even its idols by Bramins and Nairs".[99] The flagrant abuses in the management of the temples and its lands made Munro to take the necessary steps to transfer them to the more direct management of the government.[100] The lands of these temples were leased out to the ryots on the tenure known as Sarkar *pāṭṭam*. On the recommendation of a committee of learned Brahmins, Munro allowed on a large and liberal scale, allowance for the due performance of religious and other ceremonies at all the temples and secured for the people adequate prices for the articles supplied for the use of those establishments in place of the arbitrary exactions to which they had formerly been subjected on that score.[101] The result was that expenses for the religious establishments were received from the General Treasury and ceremonies were performed consistent with established customs, and that in a better ordered devotion.[102] This measure of Munro did much good by rescuing from capricious and corrupt management a vast extent of valuable real property estimated to yield a revenue of nearly four and a half lakhs of rupees and placing it under the systematic control of the government.[103] P. E. Conner says: "The assumption of the pagoda lands appear to

temples. They were exempted from death punishment and for their wrong doings received only a "mild chastisement" from their superiors. They served their rulers in everything except war. They were learned in religion, possessed many books on religious subjects, and believed and respected many truths. For their learning and piety they were held in high esteem by every one, even kings. M. L. Dames (trans. and ed.) *The Book of Duarte Barbosa* (London, 1918), vol. II, pp. 35-37

99 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 61–62.

100 *Ibid.*, F. 61.

101 *Ibid;* V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 464.

102 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 94–5.

103 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 61.

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have been a most judicious measure, as reducing the power of authorities that must have jarred with those of the state, but above all correcting their abuses".[104]

The assumption of Dēvasvams by Munro was actuated by political reasons. The vast accumulation of wealth and property in the hands of Dēvasvam authorities was a menace to the peace of the country. The Dēvasvam synods afforded a safe asylum to malcontents and law breakers. The synods also exercised judicial and executive functions over the *sankētham* lands owned by them setting at naught the authority of the sovereign, who was to recognize their power and obey their commands for his existence. The existence of such sacrosanct and superstrong forces in the state was a threat to the throne.[105] The condition of the Dēvasvams had been a source of great anxiety to the government and a reorganization became necessary for the interests of both. The opportunity was wisely availed of by Munro, and he effectively belled the cat as stated above. In 1817 Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi informed the Madras Government that the reorganization of the Dēvasvams was working in an extremely satisfactory way.[106]

Munro had great concern for public officers and he considered their welfare as his welfare. He gave them tolerably liberal salaries and that in money.[107] Considering their welfare, a distinct and clear scale of pension was introduced.[108] A system of corporal punishments was introduced by Munro in the case of erring public servants and that also was to improve and not to destroy them. He passed his decision on cases of irregularity only after proper investigation and ascertaining facts. The servants punished were not dismissed from service, but were asked to continue and work on right lines.[109] Likewise, Munro had not reduced the public servants to the position of mere tools or puppets of government. He was not in favour of that. The public servants were given sufficient freedom; not to exploit, suppress and oppress the people, but to make them happy and contended. Lt. P. E. Conner says: "The

104 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 94.

105 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *loc. cit.*, p. 54. Dewan Vēlu Tampi, considering these factors was the first man to contemplate the assumption of those institutions. But the rebellion of 1809 and his consequent death, smashed those ideas.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 67; Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 61–64.

107 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 97.

108 Shungoony Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

109 V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 461; Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *loc. cit.*, p. 52.

head of the states enjoys every possible consideration, and as much power and prestige as is necessary to the dignity of the station, or compatible with the happiness of the people."[110] These policies of Munro removed from the minds of the government servants, who once exercised vast powers, the hatred toward the British and made them whole heartedly support the British cause and submit before the new rulers willingly.[111]

Munro was a great philanthropist, dedicated himself heart and soul to better the condition of those who were laden with the evils of society. He was shocked when he saw the condition of the lower classes of the population in Travancore, which was wretched and miserable and the attitude of the authorities toward them. The rulers embraced the maxim that only by reducing their subjects to hunger and nakedness, that they were able to govern them. The Rāja of Travancore told Duncan: "If I allowed them to enjoy ease and plenty, they would immediately revolt against my authority."[112] A large majority of the population were actual slaves of the soil, who were stamped as untouchables. They were known under the general term of *Cerumakkal* or children of slavery. P. E. Conner says: "Their name is connected with every thing revolting, shunned as if, inflicted with the plague: the higher classes view their presence with a mixture of alarm and indignation; and even towns and markets would be considered as defiled by their approach. The sherramukkul are attached to the Glebe, but real property, in absolute market value not much above the cattle, united with them in the same bondage, and greatly below them in estimation."[113] The slaves were wholly left to nature, experienced little sympathy in sickness and always enjoyed the bitter fruits of poverty and oppression from their masters of the privileged classes. A slave possessed no property and his freedom produced starvation which generally made him find sanctuary in the convents and schools of the Christian settlements.[114] They were partly employed in government

110 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 96–7.

111 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Quilon, 12 October 1812. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 10 January, 1815, Sl. No. 377, F. 120.

112 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818 *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 23–24.

113 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 140.

114 Frois to the Portuguese Fathers, dated Goa, 8 December 1560 in J. Wicki (ed.), *Documenta Indica*, vol. IV, p. 793.

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lands and partly rented out to the ryots.[115] The murder of a slave was scarcely considered a crime and the deed of transfer contained the clause "you may sell or kill him or her."[116] These people lived in "secret lurking places" or "in the most desert places."[117]

Those classes of the population, who were above those of the slaves and below the Nairs, mainly the Nāḍārs and the Īḻavas, also suffered much under the yoke of the privileged classes and were considered as their slaves. P. E. Conner writes: "Martyrs to the distinction of castes, they are treated by the higher orders with supercilious scorn; too poor to invite their rapacity, they are held by them in bondage, at least they are awed into a servitude, mitigated to be sure, when contrasted to that of the praedial slaves."[118] Among them there were masters and servants, proprietors of lands, trees and villages, and labourers.[119] Their condition in general was miserable and a Nair was expected instantly to cut down those among them who defiled him by touching his person, and a similar fate awaited a Pulaya or a Paraya, who did not turn out of his road as a Nair passed.[120] As the Nairs formed the warrior caste, the lands were mostly cultivated by the Īḻavas, and the Nāḍārs. They worshipped their own gods, lived apart, and strictly avoided all contact with castes lower than their own.[121] This despicable caste system,[122] which made the lower classes of Travancore remain in separated and isolated social compartments helped the privileged classes dominate them with all their arrogance and cruelty. The Nairs wanted to maintain this inhuman system unimpaired and acted as active and careful guards. The lower classes were unable to better their conditions by changing their jobs for better ones.[123]

115 Memorandum of the Christian Missionaries to the Maharaja of Travancore, dated 19 March 1847. Cover File No. 286.

116 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 141.

117 M. L. Dames, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 68–69.

118 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 136.

119 *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, 1827–28, (London, 1828) p. 162

120 Walter Hamilton, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 180.

121 M. L. Dames (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 60.

122 The idea of caste is the physiological instinct of race distinction, which encourages hypergamy ... and tends to separate the progeny of mixed marriages into distinct endogamous groups ; and that the evolution of the elaborate modern systems of caste has been due largely to the influence of fiction that differences of religion, custom, locality, profession and the like are analogous to race distinctions, and should be similarly steriotyped ; a fiction characteristic of the Hindu genius ; and popularised by the Brahmin myth of the four vedic castes. C. A. Innes, *Madras District Gazetteers*, Malabar, vol. I, p. 95.

123 G. Maffei, *Historiarum Indicarum libri*, vol. I, pp. 58–59.

The whole burden of taxation, which was arbitrary, unscientific and barbarous fell on the back of the lower classes. They had to pay a number of taxes to the government, even for the hair they grew and for the breasts of their women.[124] The most severe among the taxes were *prāyaccittam* and *puruṣāntaram*. The *prāyacittam* authorized any officer of the government to impose and levy fines at his discretion on the inhabitants for any supposed or real offence. The fines were to be appropriated to the treasury with the exception of twenty percent of their amount, decided between the Dewan and the officers by whom they were imposed. But a portion of them only was in fact remitted to the treasury. The rest was shared among the *kāryakkārs* and constituted part of their emoluments.[125] Always equally arbitrary in valuation as rigid in exaction, the *puruṣāntaram* was perhaps even more severely felt than the *prāyaccittam*. The *puruṣāntaram* was an undefined tax upon the inheritance of property generally exceeding forty percent of its value. The amount of *puruṣāntaram* like that of *prāyaccittam* was partly shared among the *kāryakkārs*.[126] Poll-tax was less severe in its imposition, but distressing from the abuses of its collection. It was levied on all males from sixteen to sixty, with the exception of Nairs, Māppiḻās, and artificers, the very classes best able to pay it.[127] It furnished a revenue of about a lakh of rupees annually. This was the amount realized by the government, but that collected from the people could never be accurately determined.[128] Some times poll-tax was collected even for the dead. Many families who were unable to pay the poll-tax migrated into other countries. The government then went to the extremity of compelling the representatives of the families thus emigrated into other countries to pay the poll-tax due by them.[129] The revenue accounts of the Travancore Government for 1807–8 exhibit Rs. 88,044 as poll tax collected from Nāḍārs and Īḻavas, and government *pāṭṭam* tax on trees from which they drew toddy to pass their livelihood amounted to Rs. 18,523 while

124 N. R. Krishnan, *Iḻavar Innaleyum Innum* (Malayalam), pp. 175–80.

125 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 39–40.

126 *Ibid.*

127 Walter Hamilton, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 671.

128 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 40–41.

129 C. M. Agur, *op. cit.* p. 573.

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the poll tax on Ceṭṭies and other castes amounted to only Rs. 4634.[130] Poll-tax was a source of extreme hardship and suffering to the lower classes. In addition to the poll-tax, certain classes of people like the Nāḍārs and Īḷavas were compelled to render *ūḻiyam* services or gratuitous labour without hire to the government and at the pleasure of its officers.[131] The Christian festivals, fishermen's nets, pepper, betelnut and coconuts, were also included among those heavily taxed by the government.[132] The heavy taxes on the agricultural products made the life of the ryot one of great misery and suffering and that in turn destroyed the prosperity of the state. Kuñcādicca Piḷḷa, an influential local man of Neyyāttinkara, gave the following description about the condition of the ryots and the taxes paid to the government by the people to Munro: "Of the ryots of the Travancore samstanum[133] who by their labour and industry cultivated in their own lands any kind of fruits, roots, vegetables or other edibles besides toddy, an extraordinary and indefinite assessment was collected in addition to the fixed rent of their lands; there were poll taxes calculated Tullearah, Wullerah, Kutileckum, and Shettoopautam & ca., levied upon all the lower classes of the people in general and contributions under the names of rupawarree, nellawarree, nuzzurwarree & ca., were at pleasure imposed upon the country and collected with rigour the valuable productions reared in the ryot's gardens such as huldee, adruck pepper, and betel-nut were not permitted to be disposed by their proprietors according to their advantage and discretion, but were monopolized by the Circar for a particular price and were collected by means of Circar servants specially appointed for that duty, these persons collected the different articles from the inhabitants and in weighing them took an overplus, equal to the half at least of their quantity and even for what they admitted as received from the inhabitants; they never paid the allotted price, but gave a small part of it in money and part of the remainder in articles of merchandise of little value. Besides if the inhabitants were not able from any accident to supply the usual quantity of pepper, betel-nut, & ca., they were required to make good the deficiency and at the price usually allowed to them, but at the advanced price which the Circar procured in disposing of these things the several fruits, vegetables, and other edibles which the ryots cultivated in their gardens were required to be delivered for the use of the Pagodas,

130 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 96.

131 *Ibid.* F. 39.

132 Walter Hamilton, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 671.

133 State.

Ootparahs, & ca., and whether or not the proprietors were willing to part with them they were always taken from them generally without any price being given in return and the Circar officers frequently sent people to cut or dig them up by force in the gardens where they grew. No regard whatever was paid in the cases to the complaints of the ryots or to their demands for the price of their property."[134] The government was cheated by fictitious remissions, the amount of which went into the pockets of the officers. The Rāja was the general merchant of the state and the royal commerce and monopolies destroyed its prosperity. Nearly the whole produce of the soil was in one shape or another engrossed by the government, while a most inadequate share of its value was accorded to the cultivator. The ryots being unable to read or write depended upon the accountants for information regarding their annual rents and balances and seldom obtained receipts for their payments.[135] Kuñcādicca Piḷḷa says: "They were not furnished with any receipt but on asking for one were put off with various pretexts, being told to come again and on coming again were informed that some further collection of paddy or some alteration of their account was to be made and on this being done they should receive a receipt for the whole, and in the end no receipt at all was obtained. If any ryots shewd more perseverance than usual in applying for their receipts they were sure to experience every kind of hardship, they were called upon to deliver again of the paddy already delivered, they were put under restraint, and under pretext of being refractory were assessed in large fines which they were ultimately compelled to pay; when a respectable inhabitant died his legal heir was smmoned and obliged to give a large portion of the inheritance falling to him in Poorshandrum and Shavera for this purpose the heir was forced by various hardships to subscribe an engagement binding himself to the terms imposed upon him. The inhabitants on paying the money due to the Circar on account of their rents or fines or nuzzers & ca., seldom received credit for their payments in the books or were furnished with receipts, but were put off with various excuses and pretexts by the Circar officers who shared the money among themselves and two or three months afterwards, having entered it under the head of arrears renewed their demands on the ryots for its payment and collected it by every kind of coercion, hardship and torture, sending for the ryots to the kariagar keeping them

134 Statement of Kuñcadicca Pilla, For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 98–99.

135 *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the* East India Company, vol. VI, p. 278.

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imprisoned in irons forcing them to stand for hours in the sun with large stones on their back beating them and flogging them, and by these means they collected whatever they pleased."[136] This severe and inhuman mode of collection antagonized the people to a great degree and made them hate the government and its officers who collected the taxes. The cruel behaviour of the tax collectors toward the poor tax payers reached the saturation point if the latter resisted the unjust demands. The sufferings of the people on account of the taxes and their merciless collection were also noticed by William Tobias Ringeltaube, the first Protestant missionary in Travancore: "On 21st November 1812 Veera Puttra Pillay, the Turrakar (tax peon) of Cotaram in the District of Agasteeswaram came to Tameraculam and called on the Kareikar Goorooswami...for all taxes of his subdivision in anticipation of the coming year. The demand was 112½ fanams on 18 houses for taleivary, velaipadivu and kareilikanam. Goorooswami replied he was ready to pay a monthly instalment as per mamool but he was not prepared to advance a whole year's taxes. Veeraputtra Pillay then took the fire–lock from the attending Tana peon and having taken out the flint screwed it with the cock to the poor Shanar's ear, where it hung 80 minutes till the money was procured. Two other Christians Narainen and Mara Perumal had the fire–locks hanging nearly two hours on their ears in the same place. They say the pain is very great. This is now the common practice all over the Shanar country...The women in absence of their husbands are tortured by having rice pestill twisted into their hair or a great stone placed on four small pebbles on their backs standing all the time in an unnatural posture..."[137]

Munro painfully observed the sufferings of the people on account of the severe taxes and came to the conclusion that for the good and prosperity of the country, their immediate abolition was highly essential. He brought the sufferings of the lower classes due to unjust exactions to the notice of the Rāṇi and pointed out to her the need for its immediate abolition. The Rāṇi thought it improper to continue the existing inequalities and wanted her subjects to be happy and prosperous, and to that effect proclamations were issued. *Puruṣāntaram* tax altogether was abolished and Munro ordered that no subordinate should impose any fine without his knowledge.[138] Numerous other

136 For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 100.

137 C. M. Agur, *op. cit.* pp. 585–86.

138 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 58, 97.

petty and oppressive taxes, such as poll-tax, cottage tax, and net tax, under which Īḻavas, Nāḍārs, Parayas, Mukkuvar etc. suffered were also abolished. Forced labour was done away with and it was ordered that the people should in no instances be required to serve or make supplies to the state on terms cheaper than what they might demand from private individuals.[139] The proclamation abolishing the severe taxes paid by the lower classes said: "Whereas it having been found that several taxes called tallarah, vallarah, kettylacom, velapadivoo & ca., are levied upon the poor classes, Ealavers, Shanars, Washermen, Cavady, Mookaver, Pariar, and Polayer from 926 and 930, the people inconsequence being reduced to poverty, there being no such taxes upon the poor people of low classes in other countries, and it not having existed in this country previous to the year 926, and it being unjust to collect these taxes from the people, if there be any regard for the good of the people and for justice, notice is hereby given that the taxes of the above description upon Ealavers, Shanars, Washermen, Cavady, Mookavars, Pariars, Polayars are hereby discontinued from this day with such arrears as are due up to the present date."[140] This proclamation brought untold relief to the people.

The land holders lacked knowledge about the amount they had to pay to the state and to remedy this evil Munro arranged for the issue of *paṭṭās* to them specifying the extend of holding, its tenure and the government demand. He arranged for the compilation of an up to date land register.[141] The unjust method of levying additional tax when crops such as sugar cane, sesamum, pea and grain were grown on that land was abolished. A declaration was made to the effect that the government was not entitled to any more share of the profits of cultivation than the amount of revenue imposed there on.[142] The trees were numbered and classed and the rent of every plantation was determined upon fixed and equitable principles. Munro also stopped the practice of granting remissions of land revenue. He writes: "With reference to the low rates at which it was fixed and to the regularity of the seasons in Travancore, no just pretence could exist".[143] At the same time it was declared that in Nañcināḍ, where the rainfall was low, when

139 *Ibid*

140 Proclamation of Her Highness the Rāṇi of Travancore dated 1st Kartigay, 990 M. E. (1815). *The Land Revenue Manual* vol. V, p. 286.

141 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, FF. 42–3.

142 *Land Revenue Manual* vol. V, p. 209.

143 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *loc. cit.* p. 51.

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lands had to be left uncultivated owing to causes beyond the ryot's control, he was entitled to relief.[144] Munro also ordered remission of arrears due by the people to the government until the end of 1808. This measure relieved much of the sufferings of the lower classes.[145] The sytem in which the king was the general merchant of the state who monopolized all its valuable products, established commercial stations called 'Kaccēris' at important places where articles were bought and sold, was contrary to the principles of good government and fatal to the prosperity of the state, was after careful consideration abolished. The oppressive monopolies of betel-nut, coir, ginger, turmeric, cardamum etc., were abolished and the people were declared to be at liberty to collect and dispose of all the hill articles formerly engrossed by the government.[146] The exclusive sales of pepper, tobacco and salt were reserved by the government under such regulations as were beneficial to the people which brought additional revenue to the state.[147] Adequate prices, rather above the usual market rates, were fixed for the immense supplies required from the inhabitants for the use of temples, *ūṭṭupurās* and they were procured according to an allotment regulated on the most equitable principles. For the work of carrying these supplies and all other works executed for the government an increased hire was given equal to what was usually allowed in the Carnatic; supplies for the Rāja's elephants and the materials and labour furnished for the construction of buildings, were paid for according to the average market rates, and the people were in no instance required to serve or supply the government on cheaper terms than they demanded from private individuals. The system of farming the land and sea customs and all the high duties connected with it were abolished.[148] Custom houses under the direct management of the officers were established in all important parts of the country. On all imports a single frontier duty of eight percent on a very low tariff was levied and on the productions of the country subject to customs a single duty of five percent on a very low tariff only was demanded. Grain, fruits, vegetables, drugs etc., were exempted from all duties.[149] These enlightened steps were the result of a mature consideration and an accurate perception of the immediate and remote

144 Pārvati Bāyi to Col. Munro, dated 26 Tye 992 M.E. (1817), For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 108.

145 Col. Munro to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. *Ibid.* FF. 58–9.

146 *Ibid.*, F. 63.

147 *Ibid.* F. 46.

148 *Ibid.* F. 65.

149 *Ibid.*

interests of the state and not from a precipitate adoption of the principles of the economists. The reforms conferred beneficial effect on the interests of the country and promoted her commerce in a great degree.[150] The work carried out by Munro and his scientific way of approach, impressed the Rāṇi, who wrote: "You visited repeatedly every district and part of the country, you ascertained all the grievances and hardships which subsisted and which were equally ruinous to the people and to the state, you adjusted in the most minute manner all the revenue accounts, determined the lands and the rent of every individual ryot, and by proper regulations secured the payment of their rents into the public treasuries, the lands which for the purpose of malversation were falsely returned as waste or uncultivated in the revenue accounts have been by your exertions, and with the full consent of the ryots brought under assessment...."[151]

The crusading spirit of Munro, which penetrated deep into the acute problems of Travancore, gave a rude shock to the existence of slavery, that great social evil which the so-called privileged classes wanted to nurture and preserve for ever. He influenced the Rāṇi to issue a proclamation in 1812 prohibiting the the purchase and sale of all slaves other than those attached to the soil for purposes of agriculture. All transgressors were declared liable to confiscation of their property and banishment from the country. The government also relinguished the tax which they collected from slaves.[152] A bar to the gradual improvement of their circumstances was their habit of using intoxicants. All classes of people, including Brahmins, Nairs Mussalmans and even the women, indulged in the intemperate use of spirituous liquors. Arrack of a good quality was sold for a *Chakram* (about a penny) and this extra-ordinary cheapness was an incentive to the people to use it. A tax on arrack and toddy became extremely necessary from higher considerations than of finance and Munro imposed the same on the consumers. This brought to the treasury an annual tax of about a lakh of rupees and made the lower classes aware of their degeneration owing to the use of liquor.[153] The measures adopted by Munro to relieve the sufferings of the lower classes made them conscious of their rights and gave them confidence to claim them. The impact of his reforms on their lives was tremendous. P. E. Conner says: "The lower

150 *Ibid.*

151 Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi to Munro, dated 26 Tye 992 M.E. (Jan. 1817), *Ibid.* FF. 107–8.

152 V. Nagam Aiya, *op. cit.* vol. I, p. 465.

153 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government dated Quilon, 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., 27 October 1818, FF. 1813–15.

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classes and such may be called the whole body of the population, after deducting the Nairs and Brahmins have benefited incalculably by the reformation of a system that exposed them to capricious personal services, and wanton extortion; freed in a great measure from those oppressions, they promise to rise above those degrading distinctions that have hitherto stigmatized them, their industry must revive with a certainty of enjoyment, nor can they fail desiring the continuance of a domination to which they so much owe it". [154] The collapse of the feudal system followed by the lapse of power and authority of the feudal chieftains known under names of *māḍampimār*, *prabhukkanmār*, etc., gave the lower classes a fresh inspiration to advance in their social status and fight against the injustices. [155]

Colonel Munro was a devout Christian who rendered yeoman service to the cause of Christianity in Travancore. He accepted the principle propagated during the period when evangelicalism was exerting a dominant influence in English religious life that it was the duty of every Christian to support and encourage the diffusion of true Christianity, which in his opinion was identical with Protestant Christianity. [156] He gives clear expression to his firm conviction that owing to "the sublimity of its doctrine, the purity of its morals, its extraordinary adaptation to the conditions of mankind" [157] and above all, by reason of virtue and sanctity which would certainly be manifested among its adherents, the Protestant religion would make rapid progress among the people of India. He was of opinion that the spread of Protestant Christianity would be beneficial in the interests of humanity and would also contribute indirectly to the stability of the British rule in India. [158] He felt a lively desire to stay in Travancore "to afford all the assistance in his power to the diffusion of Christianity" and "to promote a cause which it is one of the first duties of every Christian to support and encourage." [159]

154 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.* vol. I, p. 98.

155 Referring to the impact of the reforms of Munro among the Nāḍārs, Conner writes : " During late years this class has been raised in some measure from the state of degradation in which they were held, the repeal of an oppressive poll-tax from which the lowest poverty could not except the abrogation of the Ooloogoo or forced labour, and many vexatious restraints may have taught them their own rights and given them confidence to claim them." *Ibid.* p. 136.

156 *Missionary Register* 1816, pp. 452–3.

157 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, dated Quilon, 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., Fort St. George, 27 October 1818, Sl. No. 128, FF. 1833–5.

158 *Ibid.* F. 1834.

159 Col. Munro to Rev. T. Norton, dated Nagercoil, 2 June 1818 in P. Cheriyan, *The Malabar Syrians and the Church Missionary Society*, 1816–1840, pp. 359–60.

When Munro came to Travancore as Resident he was attracted toward the Syrian Christians, the earliest Christian Community there and evinced a keen interest in their history, culture, customs and manners. Unlike other Christian converts of the later period, the Syrian Christians enjoyed political influence, privileges and immunities under the local kings. In virtue of their privileges, which were never contested, the princes and judges had no concern with them excepting only in criminal cases. The Syrians besides the fixed tribute, which they paid to their princes were required only to furnish a certain number of troops during their wars which were neither frequent nor of long duration. The men always moved armed; the greatest number carried a naked sword in the right hand and a shield in the left.[160] They were carefully instructed in the use of arms from their eighth to twenty fifth year and were excellent hunters and warriors. The more Christians a Hindu prince had in his dominions, the more he was feared and esteemed. [161] It was on this account as well as on that of their fidelity and strict attachment to truth in everything that the princes cherished and countenanced them so much. In virtue of the privileges granted by Cēramān Perumāḷ, a former emperor of Kerala, the Syrian Christians took precedence over the Nairs, who formed the nobility of the state and they were second in rank only to the Brahmins, for whom the kings themselves, manifested an extraordinary veneration. The Christians pursuant to the laws of the state were the protectors of the silver smiths, brass founders, carpenters, and smiths. The non-Christians who cultivated the palm trees formed a militia under the Christians. [162] The Christians depended directly upon the prince or his ministers and not on the provincial governors. If any thing was demanded from them contrary to their privileges the whole united immediately for general defence. If a non-Christian injured the Christians, he was put to death on the spot or forced to bear himself to the church of the place an offering of a silver hand according to the quality of the person offended. [163] In order to preserve their nobility the Christians never touched a person of inferior caste, not even a Nair. [164]

With the growth of Arab influence on the Malabar coast, this social and political superiority of the Syrian Christians began to wane.

160 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, dated Quilon, 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., Fort. St. George, 27 October 1818, Sl. No. 128, FF. 1817–19.

161 *Ibid.* F. 1818.

162 *Ibid.* FF. 1818–19.

163 *Ibid.* F. 1819.

164 *Ibid.*

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The internal dissensions and consequent weakness produced among them as a result of the Portuguese attempt to latinize them and to place them under their control further led to their degeneration. The Christians, conscious of their weakness, gradually withdrew from all their share in the public activities of the state in which they played a distinguished part in former days, and their place was taken over by the caste Hindus.[165] The position of the Christians became so degenerated that in the beginning of the nineteenth century they were subjected to severe oppression and extortions by the servants of the king. Bartalomeo says that "the cause of the external disputes between the Indian Christians and the Pagans was hatred on the part of the inhabitants and avarice on the part of the Sovereign's ministers".[166] Rev. Claudius Buchanan, who visited Kerala in 1806 to report on the state of Christianity there to the Government of India also describes the low position of the Christians in his monumental work *Christian Researches in Asia*. He says: "I perceived all round symptoms of poverty and political depression. In the churches and in the people there was the air of fallen greatness". The Syrian priest told Buchanan that they were in a degenerate state compared to that of their forefathers. He reminded Buchanan of the Inquisition and consequent degeneration in their social position. "They (the kings) indeed recognise our ancient personal privileges; for we rank in general next to Nairs, the nobility of the country, but they have encroached by degrees on our property till we have been reduced to the humble state in which you find us".[167] The past history and former glory of the syrians, their misfortunes and present degraded social position, excited from the very outset the pity of Munro's generous heart.

Munro thought that the religious, social, cultural and political regeneration of this ancient and interesting community could be effected by means of education, by providing facilities for the translation and

165 Syrian Metropolitan to Munro, Pol. Cons., 27 October 1818, vol. 128, FF. 1847–55.

166 Paoli Da San Bartalomeo, *Voyage to the East Indies* p. 193. Paoli was an Austrian, born in 1748. He became a Carmelite monk and came to Kerala to propagate Christianity. He stayed mostly at Varāppuḻa between 1776 and 1789. He was a great scholar and a very keen observer of men and things. He was a great friend of the Rājas of Travancore and Cochin, and also of the Dutch Governor at Cochin. He gives a true and beautiful account of the social, political, economic and cultural conditions of the then Kerala.

167 Claudius Buchanan, *Christian Researches in Asia*, p. 115.

168 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government Fort. St. George dated Quilon, March 1818, Pol. Cons., Fort St. George, 27 October 1818, vol. 128, FF. 1828–33.

circulation of the Bible, by sweeping away at the right moment all their superstitious practices, by freeing them from the civil disabilities and by improving their social status by giving them fair representation in the service of the state.[168] The lack of efficient men and money to carry out the scheme made Munro invite the Church Missionary Society (C. M. S.) to work among the Syrians, to effect the renovation of their Church and to raise them from their social degradation.[169] He sent an appeal to the Corresponding Committee of the C. M. S. praying that a few clergymen belonging to the Church of England might be sent over to work among the Syrians of Travancore and Cochin.[170] In response to the above request Thomas Norton was sent to Travancore as a missionary of the C. M. S. to work among the Syrian Christians.[171] This is the story of the beginning of the C. M. S. work in Travancore which produced a great social change in the life of the lower classes and Syrians of Central Travancore.

As a first step to improve the Syrians, Munro established a college at Kōṭṭayam in 1816 for the education of the Syrian clergy and laity. It was his great desire to obtain a translation of the Bible with the aid of those connected with the college and to produce a respectable body of local clergy for the propagation of Christianity.[172] Munro did all that he could to place the college in a state of efficiency. He gives the following motives that prompted him to found the college: "The principal object of the establishment of a college in Travancore was, to instruct the catnars and officiating priests among the Syrians in a competent knowledge of the Syriac language, in which they are at present too

169 *Missionary Register*, 1816, pp. 452–4; *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, 1819–20, p. 168.

170 *Missionary Register*, 1816, p. 387.

171 *Ibid.*, pp. 452–4.

172 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George, dated Quilon, 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., Fort St. George, 27 October 1818, vol 128, FF. 1827–28. The scheme of a Syrian Seminary or College seems to have first originated with William Tobias Ringeltaube, who proposed it to Col. Munro, among various other reforms. Mar Thoma of Omalur who had not his title to Metrānship fully established, sent a messenger all the way to Mailāḍy in South Travancore, with a long letter to Ringeltaube seeking his friendship and influence with Col. Munro. Ringletaube however did not believe that Mar Thoma's management of the Syrian Church would result in any good. Ringeltaube's proposals were for the better management and investment of the funds of the Syrian Church to secure an annual grant to support the Bishop and the priests and to establish the Seminary. Ringeltaube also proposed to send a dozen Syrian priests to Madras to be trained in English under Rev. Lovelets or one of the government chaplains who he thought would willingly help. C. M. Agur, *op. cit.*, p. 958.

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generally deficient. The ministers of the Syrians, in order to inculcate with effect the motives of religion, ought evidently to understand its principles, and believe its truths. For these purposes, a knowledge of the Syriac language is more necessary to them than a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek to our clergy men ; for the former want the excellent translations and explanations of the Sacred Books in the popular language of the country, which we possess.

" With the study of the Syriac language would, ofcourse be combined that of the Scriptures ; in Syriac, and it was intended that the students, in the course of their education, should transcribe the Bible to the greatest possible extent. Many, I may say most of the churches, are destitute of the Bible, either in the Syriac or the Malayalam languages; and the duty of transcribing the Scriptures would supply the churches with Bibles, while it would promote the instruction of the young men who occupies them. A printed version of the Scriptures in Syriac would be extremely useful. The laity were also to be taught the Syriac. The plan of the college was also intended to comprehend a system of instruction in Malayalam to priests and laity, and of translating the Scriptures and religious books into that language for general circulation and use."[173] The college made great progress under the missionaries of the C.M.S. and played a vital role in the reformation of the Syrian Church and improvement of the Syrians. Munro also greatly favoured the Protestant missionary work started by William Tobias Ringeltaube, a missionary of the London Missionary Society. He procured for them a grant of land from the Rāṇi which helped the mission to establish a Seminary at Nagercoil in 1818 to impart education to all classes of people irrespective of caste and creed. About the Christians there, Munro wrote: " The small Protestant Community formed by Mr. Ringletaube in the South of Travancore, although still in a state of infancy is extremely respected, its neophytes are called the Vedakars, or persons of the book, and sometimes people of the sutteeveda...it receives more proselytes than all the other sects of Christianity."[174]

Munro was the first Resident who pleaded for the introduction of English education. He established schools at public expense in all the districts to improve the character of the people.[175] He wrote : " The

173. *Missionary Register*, 1816, pp. 453–4.

174 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George, dated Quilon 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., Fort St. George, 27 October 1818, vol. 128, F. 1834.

175 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *loc. cit.*, p. 48.

diffusion of English literature among the people is one of the most effectual means of erradicating their errors, improving their minds and attaching them to the British nation".[176] Religious motive also worked in his mind to favour English language. " An efficient and extended system of education particularly in the English language, will contribute more effectually than any other plan to the early and substantial advancement of the Protestant religion in India. The prevalence of the Portuguese language has substantially promoted the propagation of the Roman Catholic religion. Indeed from the situation of the Portuguese in India, strong arguments may be adduced for the diffusion of the English language, as a means of supporting the British power..."[177] Munro combined a plan of educating the people both in English language and in the principles of religion. With his help, the missionaries of the C.M.S. and the L.M.S. also established many schools, and they through their patience, love for humanity and wide vision, removed the darkness, ignorance and illiteracy in which the Syrians and the lower classes lay submerged when they arrived in the country. The Syrians and the lower classes improved intellectually, socially, economically and culturally through the free education imparted to them. The beneficient activities of Munro and his efforts to spread enlightenment, produced an abiding impression in the minds of the people.

Munro " manifested the wisdom and magnanimity of a Christian statesman."[178] As a sincere Christian he painfully observed the sufferings of the Christians and decided to redress their grievances. The reforms he introduced, with the consent of the Rāṇi, for the welfare of the Christians attracted the lower classes to the fold of Christianity in large numbers and it became their asylum. He guaranteed perfect toleration in religion ; the government changed its attitude and began to encourage it openly. Through the influence of Munro, the Rāṇi issued many proclamations favourable to the Christians. A proclamation was issued in 1815 exempting Christians in Travancore from all duties connected with temples, *ūṭṭupurās* or public victualling houses, as well as requistions of whatever nature on account of Hinduism, such as contributions of all descriptions to temples and shrines, and furnishing provisions to them ; and from rendering *ūḷiyam* duties or *gratis* services to the government.[179] In 1812, Munro issued an order permitting the

176 J. Munro to T. Norton, dated Trivandrum, 13 February 1817, in P. Cheriyan, *The Malabar Syrians and the C.M.S.*, 1816–1840, p. 351.

177 *Missionary Register*, 1816, pp. 453–4.

178 *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, 1819–20, p. 171.

179 Col. Munro to the Mar Thomas Metran dated 22 Dhanu 991 M.E. in C. M. Agur, *op. cit.*, Appendix, XVIII, 6.

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women converted to Christianity to cover their bosoms as obtained among Christians in other countries, and asked the local officers not to put obstacles to their wearing clothes over their breasts.[180] The children of Christian fathers were also allowed to inherit the property of the latter, both moveable and immoveable.[181] And Munro gave the above rules the widest publicity among Christians of all denominations, making special request to all Christian ecclesiastics in Travancore, that in the event of any of the government officers and others under their countenance exacting, *ūḻiyam* services from Christian ryots, when such were connected with any Hindu religious ceremonies, and acting in the least contrary to the tenor of the proclamations and rules above referred to, to report to him at once the circumstances.[182] To render better justice to the Christians and to secure for them the same privileges as those enjoyed by their Hindu neighbours, Munro appointed missionaries and Christians as judges in the courts of Travancore. This act shows that the interest of the Christians and Christian missionaries were zealously guarded by him. The appointment of missionaries and Christians as judges so attracted the people that they saw in the courts an institution established for the express purpose of guarding their interests. Munro hoped that "the scrupulous intergrity and conscientious justice of the Christian judges would exalt the reverence of the people for British character, and contribute to found its influence still more on the durable bases of their interests and affections."[183] This measure of Munro was attended with signal benefits for Christianity; the common people found the religion as an influential one and took it as a means to free themselves from their age-old customs which compelled them to remain in the position of slaves of the dominant classes. The pioneer Protestant missionaries, Ringeltaube and Charles Mead, Norton and Bailey, received all encouragement and ardent support from him and they considered it a distinguishing privilege and favour when the British Resident in the midst of heavy duties, occasionally visited them and accompanied them to their infant churches.[184] This close connection of Munro with the Christians and the Christian Missions formed

180 Order from Col. Munro to the Sarvādhikāryakkārs of Trivandrum and Neyyāttinkara dated 19 Dhanu 988 M.E. (1812). *Ibid.*, Appendix, XVIII, 4.

181 Proclamation of Dewan Subbayyan Sankara Narayanan dated 7 Meenam 990 (1815). *Ibid.*, Appendix, XVIII, 1.

182 Col. Munro to the Mar Thoma Metran dated 22 Dhanu 991. *Ibid.*, Appendix, XVIII, 6.

183 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George dated Quilon, 30 March 1818. Pol. Cons., For St. George, 27 October 1818, FF. 1833–4.

184 C. M. Agur, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

one of the most important factors for the establishment of Protestant Christianity in Travancore on firm foundations. There was a rush of thousands of people from the lower classes to join the fold of Christianity.[185] The Christians of Travancore should ever venerate the name of Munro.

Conclusion

The greatest achievement of Munro was that he laid the foundations of the British paramountcy in Travancore which continued uninterrupted till it formed a part of Independent India in 1947. The ascendancy of the power of the British in Travancore when Munro was Resident, which exercised considerable humanity and forbearance, gave confidence and satisfaction to the mass of the people.[186] Munro gave the greatest importance to the people, which was not the principle in those days. He declared it to be the duty of the British to advance the happiness of the whole; to watch and guide the conduct both of the prince and the people and lead them in the way most conducive to their mutual security and happiness. "The prince will gradually learn to appreciate the benefits of our friendship, the people grateful for the advantageous effects of our influence will be desirous of its permanency; and a result will be obtained worthy of the superiority in knowledge, morals and virtue of the British Nation."[187] This proved prophetic. To the Rāṇi Lakshmi Bāyi of Travancore, he became the saviour who protected the state when it was in serious peril. She wrote: "You conciliated the attachment and respect of the people, you paid the debts of the state to the amount of more than 25 lacs of rupees, and you preserved inviolate all the ancient institutions for religious worship and public charity, you realized the duties of the state, and materially increased its revenues without augmenting any imposts or taxes, and after accomplishing all these beneficial objects you obtained the authority of the Government according to my desire for the appointment of a Dewan pursuant to former usage."[188] To her successor, Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi, Munro has "displayed the most strenuous exertions for the good of my people and myself and for the advancement of my name and reputation, and I am myself a witness of your zealous proceedings and their beneficial results".[189] The verdict

185 *L.M.S. Report*, 1819, pp. 53–4; I. H. Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore*, p. 34.

186 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 98.

187 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil, 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 34.

188 Rāṇi Lakshmi Bāyi to Col. Munro, July 1814. *Ibid.*, F. 105.

189 Rāṇi Pārvati Bāyi to Col Munro, dated, 26 Tye 992, M.E. *Ibid.*, F. 110.

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of the people was that he was the deliverer who lifted them from hell to heaven and gave them a new life, which was entirely different from what they experienced before his arrival. During the time of Munro the people except a few,[190] were happy, satisfied and prosperous. They prayed for the continuance of British rule for they "established justice and moderation for the protection of the people and their encouragement." They offered their prayers to Heaven "for the welfare and happiness of Her Highness the Raunee and the British Residents for the innumerable favours conferred upon them under their care."[191] The unremitted exertions of Munro made the vast majority of the people of Travancore support the British cause and remain faithful to them.

The ancient system was stripped of its abuses through the introduction of liberal and enlightened reforms, which resulted in a gradual and silent reformation. It gave the society a better form, government of more permanent security, and reduced a class of jarring complicated and mercenary authorities, into a compact and efficient regulairty.[192] When the people got liberty to declare their sentiments, they rose to present complaints in large numbers against their oppressors, the *kāryakkārs* and the measures adopted to deprive them of their powers by Munro were approved and applauded by them. Munro says: "The body of the people uniformly testified strong, marked, and decisive demonstrations of satisfaction at my interposition, and its consequences." He continues, "The mass of the people were highly pleased at the course of measures pursued for the regulation of the Government."[193] A new wave of civilization and enlightenment penetrated into Travancore which shook the very foundation of the social citadel in Travancore.

Munro was at once a great administrative genius, social reformer and a devout Christian. His wide vision, penetrating insight into the problems of Travancore and a keen determination to solve them made

190 P. E. Conner says: "The higher classes, who unaccustomed to the restraints of principle or justice, may not yet be reconciled to an authority that enforces them. The rising consideration too of the lower classes, may wound their pride, as diminishing their dignity by limiting their influence: but dissatisfaction arising from such a source can scarcely be a subject of regret, and its effects would be more than counteracted by the results springing from its cause." *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 99.

191 Statement of Kuncādicca Pilla of Neyyattinkara. For Pol. Proc., Fort William, 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 103.

192 Lts. Ward and Conner, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 96.

193 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. For. Pol. Proc., Fort William 17 July 1818, No. 20, F. 77.

him the father of a highly developed and civilized Travancore. He used his power for the political and social regeneration of the state. All arrangements for that end were invariably explained to the rulers and received their consent and approbation before implementing them to avoid obstacles on the way.[194] Munro was the first Resident who established the fact that a Resident had a mission to perform in an enlightened way. "The natural tendency and bias of the Government leads to cruelty and oppression and this must be counteracted by the moderate and wise, but vigilant form and unremitting exertion of the Resident's influence and Counsels. On this depends in a great degree the efficiency of the whole system."[195] His administration thus conferred great and unnumbered benefits to the state and the people.

In a wider sense Munro set in motion forces for long term social and political change. To the people of Travancore he was a symbol of Travancore's social awakening and the outstanding spokesman of equality and freedom. He had heralded a new society—liberal, humanist and equalitarian. An enlightened administrator, he had fathered important reforms and changes in Travancore. Above all he was a man who, with all his mind and heart loved Travancore and her people. And they, in turn, were indulgent to him and gave him their love most abundantly and extravagantly.

THE END

194 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Quilon, 12 October 1812. *Ibid.*, 10 January 1815, Sl. No. 377, F. 121.

195 Col. Munro to Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nagercoil 7 March 1818. *Ibid.*, 17 July 1818, No. 20 F. 85.

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1

Letter from Her Highness the Rani Lakshmi Bayi of Travancore to the Resident: July 1814*

Upon the death of my uncle the late Rajah the laws and customs of this state regarding the succession to the throne having been naturally investigated and accurately ascertained by you according to principles of the strictest justice it was determined by Governor General Bahadur and the Government of Madras after due deliberation that my sons only possessed a right to this country, and until I should bear a son that pursuant to ancient usages I should be vested with the sovereignty of the state. In this manner my right to the throne was generally proclaimed and was fully acknowledged by the people. After taking charge of the Government I found that the Dewan appointed in the time of my late uncle together with his associates had from their incapacity and vices brought the affairs of the country to the greatest disorder and confusion, had destroyed and ruined the inhabitants by their injustice and extortions, had embezzled and reduced the revenues, and incurred debts exceeding the amount of 25 lacs of Rupees. Besides this the minister was guilty of contempt and treachery towards my person and authority. I carefully considered all these circumstances, and after advising with my most confidential friends I concluded if such an unprincipled and unfaithful Minister should remain in office that a repetition of the treason and crimes lately exhibited by a former Dewan might take place, and the debts and burdens of the state would never be removed and that being a woman, I could not effectually control his proceedings, I therefore considered it to be exceedingly desirable and necessary that a British authority should for a time be vested with the administration of the affairs of my country and I stated to you in a letter my sentiments and wishes on the subject in the most explicit and earnest manner. In compliance with my urgent request you obtained the authority of the Government for your taking direct charge of the administration, and with care and deliberation you established the most efficient regulations for its management. You conciliated the attachment and respect of the people, you paid the debts of the state to the amount of more than 25 lacs of Rupees, and you preserved inviolate all the

*For. Pol. Proc. 1818. National Archives of India.

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ancient institutions for Religious Worship, and public charity, you realized the dues of the state, and materially increased its revenues without augmenting any imposts or taxes, and after accomplishing all these beneficial objects you obtained the authority of the Government according to my desire for the appointment of a Dewan pursuant to former usage. My mind is reflecting on these circumstances is continually impressed with a sense of the invaluable benefits that have resulted to my Government and country from your labours and exertions, and with an earnest desire that you would accept some mark of my gratitude and respect in return for the great advantages that you have conferred on my people and me. It is my most urgent and particular request that as you have refused every kind of compensation you will atleast condescend as a distinguished favour to me to accept the salary of Dewan from the time when you assumed the charge of that office until a Native Dewan was appointed, and that if the consent of the Government should be requisite, you will send this letter to them with a communication of my confident and earnest hope that they will sanction a compliance with my anxious wishes on this subject. I feel assured that the Government will not refuse their consent to a measure that will afford to me the utmost satisfaction...

(A true translation)

Sd/–
J. Munro, Resident.

2

Letter from Her Highness the present Rani Parvati Bayi of Travancore to the Resident: 26 Tye 992 M.E. (January 1817)*

When you arrived in this country the persons appointed by my late uncle to the administration of its affair neglected all the requisite means of affording satisfaction to the people, of ensuring the due distribution of justice and realizing the just rights of the Circar, and directing their views solely to their own personal profit and power embezzled the revenues of the state, exercised every species of tyranny, extortion and cruelty, destroyed the resources of the Government, failed to discharge the debts payable to the Company and oppressed the country with unheard of burdens and distress. My sister the late Raunee having maturely and seriously deliberated on the means of removing these evils of re-establishing justice and order of conciliating the affections of the

*For Pol. Proc., 1818. National Archives of India.

people, and the paying the debts due by the state and finding no person in the country qualified for the office of Dewan at a period of such extreme difficulty, urgently requested you to take into your own hands the immediate administration of the country until the debt should be discharged and under the orders of the Government you assumed the charge of that office. For many years the revenue servants and the inhabitants of the country in collusion with each other had under the most unfounded pretexts embezzled a considerable portion of the public revenues and from this cause, and also from the corruption and extortions of the revenue servants cultivation had decreased to an alarming extent, the ryots oppressed and discouraged left their lands waste, the rents which they paid were intercepted by the revenue authorities, and the resources of the state diminished each day. Besides the fixed rents of the lands an additional and arbitrary assessment was levied upon such fruits or dry grains as might be cultivated on them. The produce of the fields was subject to exhorbitant land customs on being removed from one place to another. The rents of the inhabitants being paid in kind were subject to great additional demands under the pretences of wastage and of less by measurement and the inhabitants were forced to transport them at their own expence to distant magazines and store–houses. The complaints, the grievances and the disputes of the people being heard and settled by the revenue officers were never decided upon justice, but afforded additional means of corruption, bribery, and oppression, and as the revenue servants had neither leisure or integrity to perform the duties of judges, the complaints of the people increased every day, and there was in fact no administration of justice in the country. The revenue officers under unfounded or frivolous pretences had the power of levying fines at their direction upon the inhabitants and of seizing for their own use a large portion of the estates of persons deceased, before they could be inherited by the heirs. All the rich productions of the country which were calculated to yield profit to the cultivators such as cardamoms, ginger, turmeric, betel–nut were monopolized by the Circar and the inhabitants prevented from employing their labour for their own advantage were forced to work for the Circar into great variety of wages, without any recompence at a great expence and with every great trouble to yourself. You visited repeatedly every District and part of the country, you ascertained all the grievances and hardships which subsisted and which were equally ruinous to the people and to the state, you adjusted in the most minute manner all the revenue accounts, determined the lands and the rent of every individual ryot, and by proper regulations secured the payment of their rents into the public treasuries, the land which for the purpose of

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malversation were falsely returned as waste or uncultivated in the revenue accounts have been by your exertions, and with the full consent of the ryots brought under assessment and inorder to prevent every reason of complaint a remission of 20 and 30 percent has been allowed as a deduction from their rents. The revenue hitherto paid in kind has been converted at a moderate calculation into money rent exceedingly advantageous to the people. Puttahs have been prepared and delivered to all the ryots individually and the most efficient arrangements have been made for granting receipts, and giving credit to them for all their payments of revenue. The additional assessments levied on the lands have all been abolished, the fines and arbitrary taxes upon inheritance collected at the pleasure of the revenue servants have been effectually abrogated, all the monopolies of the rich productions of the country have been annulled, and the people are allowed to dispose of these articles at their pleasure and all kinds of grain, of garden produce, of fruits, vegetables, drugs, have been exempted from road customs, and from export duties. A judicial establishment has been introduced for the administration of justice according to the Divine Shaster, and the most approved principles of equity and law, and an efficient police has been formed in the country for the prevention of crimes and the seizure of offenders. All the articles required for the use of the Circar and of the pagodas from the inhabitants have been ordered to be purchased at the current market price, a fair and equitable compensation is granted for the labour of the people when required and strict arrangement has been made for securing the inhabitants provided their pay their rents from every kind of molestation or demand on the part of the public servants. Inconsequence of these wise and salutary measures, the people are free from trouble, and are contended and happy, they cultivate their lands and gardens, peace and satisfaction generally prevail, and the revenues of the state have been considerably augmented. Besides this, the inland customs having formerly been rented for each stage to farmers every article was liable to fresh and heavy duties at ten or fifteen different stations and the farmers seldom fulfilled their agreements, but contracted great arrears to the Circar, you soon discovered the ruinous effects of this system to the trade of the country, and with equal benefit to the Circar, and to the merchants, you abolished all contracts for land customs at separate stations, and established one sole duty of 5 percent on a moderate tariff, to be levied only once on the same article. Inconsequence to this excellent regulations both the trade of the country and the revenue derived from inland and export duties have been greatly increased. The former regulations for the sale of salt being vexatious and oppressive to the

people, this branch of the public revenue has been modified in a manner that has reduced the price of salt to the inhabitants in general and has augmented the public resources. The management of the public forests has also been improved to a degree, that has augmented in a four fold proportion of the revenues drawn from them. The lands and gardens attached to the pagodas and religious institutions having been mismanaged so much as to reduce considerably their revenues to prevent the proper celebration of festivals and religious ceremonies and to disable the Circar, from keeping the pagodas in repair, these lands have been transferred to the Circar and placed under the direct control of the public servants and funds without any diminution from former usage, but in most cases with an increase, have been issued regularly every month in advance, for the use of the pagodas and charitable establishments, and inconsequence of this plan, no delay or decrease whatever takes place in the performance of religions ceremonies, the pagodas and other sacred edifices have all been repaired, and the pagoda funds under the new plan of management offered an increased revenue. Full and detailed instructions have been issued for the conduct of all the public servants: their salaries have been fixed upon a liberal footing, and are regularly paid every month: and their proceedings under the system of Government that you established are carefully inspected and controuled. The great burden of debt to the Company, and to individuals with which this country was oppressed when you took charge of it has been entirely removed, the affairs of the state have been regulated in a manner that renders the future conduct of them safe and easy, the revenues of the Government have been considerably augmented, the ryots are happy, the merchants satisfied and trade is flourishing. An unjust custom had been established here of levying a heavy poll-tax on Elevers, Shanars, and other persons of low cast, besides an oppressive impost was established on the nets of fishermen, and on other implements of use, and the hardship occasioned by those taxes, being fully represented to me, I abolished them entirely. In all these circumstances, you have displayed the most strenuous exertions for the good of my people and myself and for the advancement of my name and reputation, and I am myself a witness of your jealous proceedings and their beneficial results. My late sister often made mention in my hearing of these things and dwelt on the great obligations due to you by this state. I ascribe alone to the favour of the Almighty, and to the effect of the eminent charities and good works of my ancestors that you come to this country and took charge of its affairs. While I and any of my successors remain, we shall never cease to cherish a gratified remembrance of your friendly exertions... The young Rajah and myself are well, and I trust you will gratify me with accounts of your health.

Sd/- J. Munro, Resident.

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3

A REPORT ON THE AFFAIRS OF TRAVANCORE*

To

The Chief Secretary to the Government,
Fort Saint George.

Sir,

I judge it to be my duty to submit to the consideration of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council a succinct review of my proceedings in administration of the affairs of Travancore and Cochin during the period of time while I have held the office of British Resident in these countries. This report from particular circumstances will be more limited in the details than I had wished to make it: but it will exhibit a faithful account of my public measures in Travancore and Cochin, and of the reasons on which they have been founded.

I received charge of the British interests in Travancore at a juncture of peculiar difficulty, when the plan of policy to be pursued by the British Government would probably determine whether that state should become a peaceable and faithful ally of the British Nation or continue in a condition of disorder and anarchy, that rendered it equally dangerous to its neighbours, and incapable of fulfilling its engagements. The war prosecuted by the Rajah and people of Travancore against the British Government was proceeded by a long course of internal misrule and agitation, and the history of Travancore for the last century displays continued alternations of sanguinary and unqualified tyranny on the part of the Sovereign, and of turbulence, treachery and revolt on that of the people.

The last dynasty of Travancore Princes which terminated about the year 1700 in the person of Aswiny Perumal Mootha Tumbraty governed a narrow tract of country extending from Anjengo to Oodagherry with a precarious authority that was either shared or resisted by numerous inferior Chiefs. The first prince of the Cherakul family nearly perished in an attempt to subdue his refractory subjects and he escaped from destruction by the treacherous murder of the rebel Chiefs in the Pagodas of Trivandrum during a period of solemn truce. Soon afterwards the Thumbymars or descendants of the Rajah's asserted a right to the

* For. Pol. Proc. 1818. National Archives of India.

sovereignty at the head of a formidable insurrection, and reduced the Rajah to the utmost extremity. The assistance of a body of Troops from the Hindoo Rajah of Trichinopoly enabled him to oppose his enemies, and having seized the Thumbymars, by treachery, he put them to death. The next Rajah found employment for the restlessness of his subjects in conquering the adjoining States which he annexed to his dominions. The administration of this Prince has been described by Orme, who was born in this country in terms that have displayed until lately a just portrait of the Government of Travancore. "It is (says the historian) a remark warranted by constant observation that, whether the Government is administered by Gentoos, the people are subject to more and severer oppressions than when ruled by the Moors — avarice is his / the Gentoo's / predominant passion, and all the evils, obdress, cunning and perseverance of which he is so exquisite a master are exerted to the utmost in fulfilling the details of this vice, and his religion instead of inspiring frees him from the remorse of his crimes, for whilst he is harassing and plundering his people by the most cruel oppressions he is making peace with his Gods, by denying nothing to their priests. The present king of Travancore has conquered or carried arms into all the countries which lay round his Dominions, and lives in the continual exercise of his arms. To atone for the blood which he has spilt, the Brahmins persuaded him that it was necessary he should born anew; this ceremony consisted in putting the prince into the body of a Golden Cow of immense value, whereafter he had laid the time prescribed he came out rejuvenated, and freed from all the crimes of his former life. The cow was afterwards cut up and divided among the Seers, who had invented this method for the remission of his Sins." This Rajah at the suggestion of the priests introduced a system of Government that has been a principal source of all the domestic calamities that have subsequently afflicted and desolated Travancore allowances for the support of Bramins, and new ceremonies and festivals at the Pagodas were established on a scale of lavish and extravagant expenditure, altogether disproportionated to the resources of the State, a large military establishment of troops and militia was maintained, and in order to meet those expenses of a plan of taxation and internal Government was instituted more rigorous, oppressive and ruinous than has perhaps ever existed, in any other country. The Rajahs were tyrants on principle even; they embraced the maxim that the rigid exercise of arbitrary power was the only method by which they could repress the turbulence of their subjects, and maintain internal peace. This fact has been avowed to me by the most respectable persons in Travancore whom my expressing great surprize at the cruel and despotic principles of their

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Government affirmed that, they were rendered necessary by their refractory and rebellious disposition of the people. The old Rajah of Travancore who died in 1798 and in the opinions of the Honorable the Court of Directors was "a prudent man attracted to the British connection" said to the late Mr. Duncan who visited him in 1795, and had remarked the wretched and miserable appearance of his people "it is only by reducing my subjects to hunger and nakedness that I am able to govern them, if I allowed them to enjoy ease and plenty, they would immediately revolt against my authority." No maxim of Government could be more unfortunate than this was in its consequences, it reduced the people to poverty and misery it occasioned an exampled deprivation of principles and morals amongst them, and instead of securing internal tranquillity it produced a regular series of tumults, treasons and rebellions. I have received an account of several serious insurrections that occurred during the reigns of the Rajahs who died in 1758 and 1798 and the subsequent state of Travancore is described with accuracy in a letter from the Honorable the Court of Directors of the 29th September, 1809, from which I shall quote a few passages — "In 1799 an insurrection broke out in the Districts in 1800, a babal headed by a person named the Sumpreddy seized the reins of Government: gross abuses prevailed in many of the departments, the revenues were decreasing whilst the bulk of the people were in the lowest state of depression, and another insurrection took place on account of oppression in some branches of the collections. The Resident after some absence from his station on returning to it in December 1801 found that all the relations of the old and respectable Dewan, who himself had suffered a violent death, but had also been murdered, and that Sumpreddy the former favourite had been disgraced and imprisoned, by means of the new Dewan Vally Tomby". But no precarious was the possession of power in that State, that almost immediately after a strong conspiracy was formed against the Dewan Vally Tomby in which the Rajah himself was supposed to be engaged. The Dewan was excluded from all confidence, his enemies openly triumphed, a near day was fixed on for his "death without any trial, and he fled to the British Residency by whose firmness and remonstrances the Rajah was at length diverted from his purpose, the conspirators were thrown into prison, and the Dewan obtained not only his life, but the restoration of his power". The Resident's letters written at this time and in the two preceding years describe in strong terms the degraded state in point of character both of the Government and of the principal people. Before the end of that year 1804, a formidable revolt took place among the Nair Battalions in the service of the Rajah. Their original cause of dissatisfaction

appear to have been a reduction in their allowances, these the Rajah restored, and short calm succeeded, but the revolt burst forth again with increased violence — the Ring leaders liberated the conspirators in the former plot, increased their number to 10,000 men, and as was asserted by the Rajah himself at length extended their view to the subversion of the British power and influence in Travancore, and the assumption both of the Dewan and Resident." In 1808 a general war against the Company was commenced by the Travancoreans in an atrocious attempt to murder the Resident, and the officers of the Subsidiary Force. The fullest evidence exists of the wars having been authorised by the Rajah and supported by the mass of the people. These had no motives of attachment to the oppressive and cruel Government under which they lived, but their prejudices and passions were inflamed by the arts of their rulers into a spirit of decided hostility against the British power, and this disposition of mind was further strengthened by the contests of the war and the measures pursued upon its termination. All the public servants employed under the Dewan Vally Tomby in general men of great influence were dismissed with ignominy and suffered a confiscation of their property, the Nair Battalions were broke with disgrace, the militia was suppressed, and these men deprived at once of power, wealth, and even of subsistence, diffused a spirit of resentment and disaffection throughout the country. The new Dewan Womanah Tomby ignorant of business and degraded by habits of intemperance, aggravated by his character and conduct the feelings of discontent which prevailed against the British power, by which he was supported in office. He assumed an undisguised superiority and control over the Rajah, whom he placed under a kind of restraint, he expelled the Rajah's confidential friends from the palace, and proceeded to the length of removing his favourite wife from Trivandrum, and the Rajah by character cruel, violent, and revengeful endeavoured to retort these injuries by assassinating the Dewan and obstructing by every possible means the measures of his administration, and the payment of the debt to the Company. These conflicting interests exasperated all the evils inherent in the arbitrary and pernicious constitution of the Government, the public servants oppressed the people, embezzled the collections, and disobeyed orders, the people paid the revenue only by compulsion, condemned their superiors, and began to form and even to execute fresh plans of commotion and insurrections.

The war against the British Government was commenced by the Rajah under the ostensible, but fallacious pretext of the insufficiency of his resources to meet the demands stipulated by his treaty and the early

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payment of the arrears of subsidy, and the expenses of the war was considered as an indispensable pledge of the sincerity of the Rajah's intention to preserve the relations of peace and friendship and fulfill the terms of his engagements with the Company. The reduction effected in the military establishments of Travancore, were deemed competent to enable the Rajah to apply an adequate portion of his revenue to the liquidation of his debt: but even if those reductions should not be fully sufficient for that purpose, it was expected that the Rajah's Government in conformity to their engagements and in order to recover the friendship and confidence of the English Nation, justly forfeited by their conduct in the war, would have erected the most strenuous efforts to accomplish that object at the earliest practicable moment. But no progress whatever was made in discharging the debt, no disposition was even manifested to secure by a system of economy and retrenchment, the means of effecting that end and the remonstrances incessantly addressed by Resident to the Rajah's administration on this subject were entirely negatory. This continued failure on the part of Travancore to execute its just engagements, was correctly imputed by the Governor General to the existence of a spirit of contumacy and hostility towards the British Government, and his Lordship deemed it necessary in November 1809, to address a Letter to the Rajah distinctly apprizing him in the following terms of the necessity which would occur for the entire assumption of the revenues and administration of his country, if he delayed longer to discharge his obligation—"My reluctance indeed to pursue measures in any degree injurious to your Highness's feeling still excites in my mind an anxious desire to avoid the necessity of resorting to the means thus established, for the realization of the public dues, and leads me notwithstanding the large amount of the arrears of subsidy, and the unpaid charges of the late campaign, to afford your Highness a farther apportunity of providing by your own exertions for the liquidation of them and of adopting such arrangements, as may hereafter secure the punctual discharge of the stipulated subsidy. This forbearance on my part however entitles me to express that your Highness will immediately specify the precise period of time at which you will engage to discharge the whole amount of the charges of the campaign, so soon as it shall be made known to you, and afford the most satisfactory assurance of regularity in the future payment of the subsidy: your Highness clearly understanding at the same time that a failure on either of these points must be followed by the assumption of the revenues and administration of your country, and the assignment of the prescribed proportion of them for the support of your Highness's diginity in the manner stipulated in the 5th and 6th

Articles of the Treaty. In adopting this resolution your Highness cannot refuse to admit that I have consulted rather the dictates of delicacy towards your Highness than the interests of the Company. Your Highness therefore will be prepared to believe that the duty which a regard to these interests imposes on me, will not permit me to abstain from the measure of assuming the revenue and administration of the country agreeable to the tenor of the treaty; if the expectation in which I am willing to confide of the speedy liquidation of outstanding demands should unfortunately be disappointed". His Lordship's letter delivered to the Rajah with solemnity in the presence of the British officers of the force was received with indifference bordering on contempt and produced no beneficial change in the councils of His Highness, for a year afterwards on my arrival in Travancore, no part of the debt was discharged. The Supreme Government appeared to consider this continued failure as a conclusive evidence of the disaffection and enmity that prevailed in the Rajah's Durbar and the Right Honourable the late Governor General in my last interview with his Lordship impressed on my mind the high importance which he attached to the early liquidation of the debt, not only in justice to the interests of the Company, but as a necessary proof of the pacifist and friendly temper of the Rajah's Government; my early despatches from Travancore shew the utter neglect of any active measures for the liquidation of the debt, manifested by the Rajah's Government, and the extreme confusion and disorder in which the affairs of the country were involved. The Dewan grossly ignorant of the situation and resources of the country mentioned sometimes one lac of Rupees, and sometimes 4 lacs, as the sums that could be appropriated annualy to the payment of the debt: he had even the assurance to declare that the Rajah possessed no right to demand a view of the accounts of his country and he could suggest no plans of economy or finance of retrenchments or improvement to meet the demands of the British Government. The Rajah with equal affrontesy and falsehood declared his entire innocence of the war, which he had himself excited, authorised, and partly conducted, imputed the failure in paying the debt to the inefficency of the minister: but proposed no arrangements for the accomplishment of that object. I was employed in unremitting but unavailing endeavours to establish some degree of efficiency in the Government when the Rajah died, a disputed succession occured and Her Highness the late Raunee was placed on the musnud. I have so fully described the grounds on which this arrangement was founded that it would be superfluous to advert to them in this place; but the accession of Her Highness to the throne formed a new era in the history of Travancore, and imposed upon the British Government

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the duty of pursuing a more decided plan of measures for the administration of its affairs.

Travancore as its Government was constituted at that period of time continually threatened the British interests with the dangers of continuous anarchy or disaffection, and it was indispensable to the accomplishment of the common object of the alliance that the internal tranquillity of that state and its connection with the English Nation should be established upon the solid basis of order, justice, moderation and good Government. To remove the serious obstacles opposed to the attainment of those salutary ends by the corruption, abuses, and radical and accumulated evils which pervaded every department of the state, required the formation of a more enlightened, equitable and vigorous system of administration than had appeared for sometime in that country. The weakness and inefficiency inevitable in the Government of a woman inexperienced with the conduct of affairs and surrounded with interested advisers, furnished further reasons for confiding additional powers to the Minister in immediate charge of the executive authority. But Womanah Tomby was obnoxious to Her Highness the Raunee than he had been to the late Rajah and his evident incapacity for the management of affairs; together with his misconduct in having appropriated to himself the confiscated property of the persons implicated in the war rendered his removal from office unavoidable. There was no person in the country fit to succeed him in ordinary times, and much less in the exigency which then subsisted I had written to the late Resident previously to his departure from Travancore, requesting to learn the person best qualified in his judgement for the office of Dewan in the event of the death of Womanah Tomby, whose removal I did not then anticipate. I was informed by Colonel Macaulay in reply that he knew no person fitted for the situation and my own experience after my arrival in Travancore fully convinced me of the justness of his opinion, for everything conspired to impress upon my mind the most unfavourable sentiments of the principles and characters of the leading man in that state. The British Government had repeatedly declared their anxiety to resume Travancore from the difficulties in which it was involved, and to maintain the integrity independence and dignity of that state as a British ally—I was sincerely solicitous to second these benevolent views and whatever measures entered into my contemplation for the conduct of its affairs were directed to the object of promoting in common with the interests of my own country and the permanent prosperity and happiness of Travancore. The arrangement announced by the Supreme Government of assuming the

entire management of the revenues and administration of the country would bear an appearance of harshness and severity towards Travancore, especially on the accession of a new sovereign it might endanger the tranquillity of the country in the agitated state of men's minds at the time, and would not perhaps effect a reformation of the principal abuses and defects in its Government, as the country on its restoration to the Rajah after the payment of the debt would probably be replaced under its former system of administration. In deliberating upon the best method of applying a remedy, under the influence of the British Government to the disorders that prevailed in this country, it appeared to my judgement that the temporary employment of the Resident as Dewan was the most efficacious and unobjectionable measure that would be adopted for that purpose. It would combine the requisite degree of authority in the executive administration with the preservation of the general form of the Government, and the power and diginty of the Rajah, and could be discontinued at once when the objects of its adoption had been fulfilled. Her Highness the Raunee and her confidential advisers came to the same resolution but with different views. They despaired of paying the arrears of subsidy and war expenses and were apprehensive that their failure would involve the assumption of the country already threatened. They supposed that a considerable reduction in the allowances of Bramins, and the religious establishments of the country would become absolutely necessary, and they were desirous to escape the odium of that obnoxious measure hitherto avoided. They concluded if the Resident should succeed in paying the debt, that a Dewan would be appointed to office, and that any delay which might occur in liquidating the debt would not at all events occasion the assumption of the country as they should have afforded a sufficiently decisive proof of their anxiety to discharge the claims of the British Government, by having put their affairs under the direct management of a British Officer. The late Raunee manifested great anxiety for my accepting the office of Dewan and I have since discovered the true motives of her conduct, which I had at first imputed in some degree to her animosity against Womanah Tomby. Her real motives were indeed clearly enough revealed by the earnest solicitude that she evinced for the reappointment of a Native Dewan, the moment when the debt was paid.

The extraordinary progress of the British power in India, and the unexampled position in which it stands appear to demand a profound consideration of the plan of conduct proper to be observed towards the states connected with us by subsidiary alliances. It would seem to be

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conformable to the designs of Providence, and to the principles of humanity and true policy that, our influence and power should be rendered to the utmost practicable extend conducive to the happiness of those States including both the sovereigns and their subjects. A system of proceeding founded on the principle that our engagements are contracted with the sovereigns only without reference to the conduct or welfare of the people, will there is reason to apprehend be productive of consequence unsuitable to the benevolent and generous views of the British Government. The history of India, indeed of Asia, presents a series of incessant rebellions, revolutions, and changes of dynasty arising both from the tyranny, incapacity, and crimes of rulers, and the ambition and corruption of the people, and our own experience of Indian sovereigns, and ministers does not encourage a supposition that any material improvement of their principles and talents has taken place in later times. Their Government left to itself, will exhibit both oppressions and relaxation, but its excesses will be restrained within bounds of comparative moderations by a fear of the people and of ambition of powerful chiefs, ready to avail themselves of their discontent. But our alliance and the presece of a British subsidiary force removing that fear, leaves them at liberty to gratify without alarm their passions of avarice and injustice. The minds of the sovereign labouring under a certain consciousness of inferiority and degradation from the political restraints of the alliance often sink into a state of apathy, or of sensual indulgence, that incapacitates them for the duties of Government. The evils suffered by the people are imputed to their alliance with strangers a measure in itself sufficiently obnoxious to their prejudices to be regarded with aversion. They become our enemies, anxious to relieve their country from what they consider to be the principal source of its calamities. The weakness of Government among a people obedient to force rather than to the laws, and destitute of those motives and habits of attachment to legitimate authority and the general good which are produced by religious and moral instruction, is usually attended with insubordination and anarchy. The excesses of the Prince may have occasioned a degree of desolation in his country that renders its entire assumption necessary in order to prevent its absolute ruin. The history of Oude for the last 30 years may perhaps illustrate these observations. Although in India the rulers are the sole depositories of the majesty and authority of their states, still our alliances can scarcely be considered as concluded with them alone, but with the states collectively which they govern, and we ought perhaps on principles of justice to endeavour rather to advance the happiness of the whole than consult only the personal claims and pretensions of the

rulers, to watch and guide the conduct both of the Prince and the people and lead them in the way most conducive to their mutual security and happiness. The Prince will gradually learn to appreciate the benefits of our friendship, the people grateful for the advantageous effects of our influence will be desirous of its permanency, and a result will be obtainad worthy of the superiority in knowledge, morals and virtue of the British Nation. The degree in which our influence and interposition should be exerted, must be determined entirely by circumstances, and it would be equally unadvisable to urge them too far as to adopt a system of withholding them entirely. But in Travancore the positive stipulations of the treaty authorised us to interpose our power for the amelioration of its internal administration and the Right Honorable the late Governor General in his instructions to the Resident dated on the 22nd November 1809 stated — "With reference to the considerations which appear to the Governor General to render undesirable the assumption of the management of the Revenues and the administration of any part of the country of Travancore, his Lordship farther desires that you will submit to the deliberations of Government as provided for in treaty any regulations and ordinance for the internal management and collection of the Revenues which in your judgement would lend to secure the application of the real resources of the country to the payment of outstanding and current demands." But neither the regulations proposed by my predecessor or any other plan of measures for the improvement of the internal administration of Travancore, could be introduced with any prospect of success, under the direction of Minister Womanah Tomby or of any other native of that country with whom I was acqainted. A native minister in order to execute these plans must have been invested with great and even unusual powers, which he most assuredly would abuse. If destitute of authority he would not enforce obedience and most probably would increase the general confusion for the purpose of showing the necessity of enlarging his powers. From past and very recent experience it was evident that the Dewan's power if great would be dangerous and mischievous, if weak negatory. The measure of assuming the office of Dewan which I adopted at the earnest desire of the Raunee, and with the sanction of the Government, was rendered by the reasons which I have stated advisable and expedient with actual emergency of affairs; I certainly was not induced to take charge of that office by any prospect of facility in the execution of its duties, for I saw that they would be laborious, arduous and difficult. The principle of my proceedings was to conciliate both the Rajah and the people, and this could be accomplished only by conferring benefits on them. To please the Rajah it was necessary that

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his authority, dignity and revenues should be maintained unimpaired, and especially that the burdens of the country should be speedily removed; and to please the people it was requisite that the oppressions, the onerous imposts, and ruinous monopolies under which they laboured should be abolished, measures which would ofcourse decrease the revenues, and the means of paying the debt. I however cherished a hope that by a system of activity, order and justice, I might succeed in accomplishing those objects apparently irreconciliable. My expectations were not disappointed: in less than three years although I encountered far greater difficulties than I had anticipated. I succeeded in paying besides the current subsidy, debts of 18 lacs of Rupees to the Company, and nearly 6 lacs to individuals, in abolishing the most oppressive monopolies and taxes, in settling the affairs of the country on principles of justice and humanity, and I restored the management of the state to a Native Dewan, delivered from its burdens, with a greatly augmented revenue, and in a situation of complete internal tranquillity.

I shall beg permission to occupy the time of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, by a more particular description of the system of administration and revenue that obtained in Travancore, and the measures employed for their reformation. The authority of the Dewan subject only to the controul of the Rajah, as far as he was pleased to exert it was established over every department of the State and included the power of life and death, when the Dewan held also the office of Dulway. The country was distributed into three divisions each of which was governed by a Wallia Survaddy Karigar, whose power like that of the Dewan extended to every department, uncontrolled by any collateral authority. Every division was subdivided into three or four subordinate divisions governed respectively by Survaddy Karigars, each of these was again divided into four or five Districts, named Mundaputwasels, governed severally by Karigars and every each Mundaputwasels, was divided into Proworties, and every Prowortey into Moories under their respective officers. The last division comprehended only a few houses. There was thus a regular chain of officers from the Dewan to the Ryot, each of whom exercised in his particular District, all the powers of Government, civil, military, judicial revenues & ca. no description can produce an adequate impression of the tyranny, corruption, and abuse of this system, full of activity and energy in everything mischievous, oppressive and infamous, but slow and delatory to effect any purpose of humanity, mercy or justice. This body of public officers united with each other on fixed principles of combination, and mutual support resented a complaint against

one of their members as an attack upon the whole. Their pay was very small and never issued from the Treasury but supplied from several authorized exactions made by themselves. They offered on receiving their appointments large nuzzers to the Rajah; and had afterwards to make presents on days of public solemnity that exceed the half of their pay. They realized in the course of two or three years large sums of money, and on losing their situations were generally subjected to a complete confiscation of their property for the benefit of the Circar. If the Rajah through special favour exempted any individuals from this disgrace, he knew that he would realize whatever portions of their property he pleased on their death by the process of Poorshandrum. The Rajah therefore imposed no restraint on the rapacity of the Karigars, aware that their plunder would soon be transferred to his own treasury; nor does it appear that this consideration had any effect in checking their extortion. They always calculated on being able to conceal their property in the event of a confiscation of it, being ordered during their lives; and they do not seem to have felt any concern as to the mode of its disposal on their death. They gratified therefore without restraint or limits their predominant passions of pride, avarice, and corruption. The Rajah seldom appeared in public, and when he did appear was surrounded with such a body of troops and attendants as precluded the approach of his people. The Dewan was almost equally inaccessible to complaints: he usually sat in deep recess in the midst of sepoys and public servants, persons of inferior cast could scarcely approach him at all, and those permitted to come nearer, were obliged to manifest every appearance of respect and awe, and always to offer a present of money. The same state was effected by all the subordinate Karigars, and particularly that part of it which required that no person should approach them without a present. This law was invariable. In fact complaint was useless, redress hopeless, the people had only one remedy, and that was bribery. This practice was universal and it was one of the melancholy circumstances in the situation of the people that one of the greatest evils was necessarily resorted to as good to mitigate the still more intolerable grievances of injustice and oppression. Innocence was protected, justice obtained and rights secured by bribes. These were also a still more efficacious means of injury, and their universal use produced an extraordinary spirit of avarice in the country; for every man endeavoured to have a secret hoard of money, as the best protection of his liberty, property and life—attached and subordinated to the several Karigars there was a regular gradation of accountants bearing distinct appellations—a Walleee Mayl Ellutt

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Pillai or accountant general was attached to every Wallee Survaddy Karigar, a Mayl Ellutt Pillai to every Survaddy Karigar, a Trimoghum Peralia Pillai to every Karigar and a Kurnum to every Prowarttikar. These men managed the revenue accounts and in general surpassed even the Karigars themselves in extortion and plunder. Their address was remarkable in fabricating false accounts; and in purposely involving their accounts in confusion and entwine with a view to defraud the Rajah, and the Ryots. The Shanars, Elevars, Chegoos and other men of inferior cast who paid a capitation tax were formed into companies of about 60 men each under persons of their own tribes called Mudafuthars, three or four of these formed a Torum under a Nair, denominated Torakar, and a few Torums were placed under a Weesharipkar, who obeyed the Karigar of his District. The unfortunate Elevars and Shanars not only paid a heavy capitation tax, but were obliged to labour without hire for the Circar at the pleasure of its officers and were in fact Helots to the Nairs. The Karigars collected the revenues arising from Preachuttum or fines, from Poorshandrum or the inheritance of property; from the capitation taxes, from extraordinaries, and from land and gardens. The two former of these taxes Preachuttum and Poorhandrum, were particularly vexatious and oppressive. The first authorised any officer of the Government to impose and levy fines at his direction on the inhabitants for any supposed or real offence. The fines were understood to be appropriated to the Rajah's treasury with the exception of 20 percent of their amount, decided between the Dewan and the officers by whom they were imposed. But a portion of them only was in fact remitted to the public treasury: the rest was shared among the Karigars, and constituted part of their emoluments. It would be superfluous to dwell upon the pernicious tendency of a system that placed the whole property of the people at the arbitrary disposal of a set of unprincipled and insatiable men. The next head, or Poorshandrum was nearly as vexatious and unjust as the former. It was an undefined tax upon the inheritance of property generally exceeding 40 percent of its value—when a person died his property was immediately attached by the Karigar of the District, and his next heir imprisoned generally in irons, and required to enter into an agreement touching the portion of the inheritance which he was willing to resign to the Rajah. A contest ensued between the Karigar and the heir in the course of which the latter was frequently subjected to torture, in order to induce him to subscribe more readily to the Karigar's terms. These generally consisted in a demand of from 30 to 40 percent of the inheritance. The heir exhausted by suffering atlast expressed his consent, by taking up a small stone, and placing upon the olai or palm leaf, in which a valuation of the property and an agreement to surrender a certain portion of it, were written. The heir on returning to his family was usually met on the road by his relations, and assailed by their reproaches, especially by those of the women, for his weak compliances. Suicides and insanity often followed these scenes. The sufferings of the heir did not terminate always with the conclusion of his first agreement, for if the Survaddy Karigar should deem it to be insufficient he summoned the heir to a second conference. The amount of Poorshandrum like that of Preachettum was partly shared, particularly latterly among the Karigars. The capitation taxes so much condemned by most writers on political economy were levied from several classes of inferior cast, and furnished a revenue of about a lac of Rupees annually. This was the amount realized by the Circar, but that collected from the people could never be accurately determined, for a number of names were not included in the lists, and the tax was often collected two or three times from the same individuals. It was a source of extreme hardship and suffering nothing could be more perfect in theory than the system of the Land Revenue in Travancore, or more defective in practice. All the lands are the private property either of the Rajah or individuals, as landlords. Those that belong in full property to the Rajah are occupied by tenants who pay a rent or Landlord's share in general exceedingly moderate, and varying according to the qualities of the soil. The rent of every field denominated in Travancore patum, is calculated upon the quantity of seed that it will receive: and seldom exceeds three times that quantity supposing that a field capable of receiving a parah of seed yields ten fold, or a crop of ten parahs, it will afford, after paying 3 parahs in rent, one parah for seed, and one for the expenses of cultivation 5 parahs or half the gross produced to the tenant, and this is the usual estimate made by the farmers in Travancore. In general a parah of land in the accounts, is of receiving a parah and a half or two parahs of seed: and the produce with ordinary pains should exceed ten fold. The excess in either of these cases is the property of the tenant, for the rent of a single field has not been increased since my arrival in Travancore. The lands of private individuals are held under a very great variety of tenures: some of them belonging to Nunboory Bramins, and ancient proprietors pay no land tax whatever: and the tax levied from the rest varies from 2 to 10 percent of the amount of their produce. The landlords generally rent their lands on patum to tenants whom they change at their pleasure, unless they should have granted leases upon written agreements. A most minute, and a very accurate revenue survey denominated Oloogoo, of all Travancore was

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completed in the year 928 comprehending all the lands cultivated, waste, mountainous and jungle with their boundaries and divisions, and generally stating the patum or rent of every field. From this Oloogoo an ackut or revenue settlement is formed, from time to time, generally every twelve or 15 years, including only the cultivated lands and mentioning their boundaries, names and numbers for every field has a separate number and name, their owners, the nature of the tenure on which they are held their tax, and with respect to the Rajah's lands, the patum or rent. Pooddoo Chittees or Puttahs corresponding with the ackut are issued to the Ryots; and in every Prowartee a separate account current under the denomination of Tindalperu is commenced with the beginning of each year with every Ryot, in which his dues and his payments to the Circar are inserted according to their dates. As the sales and transfers of land soon occasion alterations from the ackut, every Ryot receives at the beginning of the year a kind of Puttiam called kychat corresponding with the entry made in his account. Currently all payments are to be inserted immediately in the Tindalperu or account current and receipts are to be granted for them. No increase of rent or transfer of land excepting in the case of sales among the Ryots could be made without the orders of the Dewan or Rajah. But this system so moderate and just degenerated in practice into a course of fraud and abuse at the expense equally of the interests of the Rajah and the Ryots, and it has been my constant endeavour to restore it to its original purity and efficiency. Great remissions of rent were made by the revenue officers every year under the pretences of deficient crops and uncultivated lands. The Ryots applied near the season of harvest for an examination of their crops, committees of Ryots, attended by the Circar accountants were appointed for that purpose, and their reports determined the amount of the remissions to be made. These abatements were invariably made from the Circar rent or land tax, and left to the Rajah his full share of the crop. The remission usually accounted to a third or atleast a fourth part of the whole land revenue. This was a system of complete deception and fraud pregnant with the most pernicious effects on the morals and industry of the people. In general the whole or the greatest part of the remissions were appropriated by the Circar officers to themselves, and never reached the cultivators. Not even if they should be granted bonafide to the Ryots they would still be productive of the worst consequences, for with favourable seasons, low rents or deficiency of crop could be owing only to the negligence of the cultivators, and an abatement of rent would therefore be a reward and an encouragement in that case to idleness and sloth. This practice also afforded the most unbounded scope to corruption already too prevalent, for the

Ryots by presents to the Circar officers could procure a remission of their rents, and derive that profit from bribery which ought to be the reward of their industry. The conscientious and industrious cultivator had to pay his full rents: while the idle and unprincipled obtained a complete abatement of them. In the event of bad seasons it would be just to grant certain remissions to the Ryots: but the practice of allowing these to an immense amount in the best seasons, and granting them even to proprietors of land who did not pay more than 2 or 3 percent of their produce to the Circar was altogether absurd, and was entirely unknown in the adjoining countries of Cochin and Malabar. But this practice was such a source of advantage and profit to the Circar officers that, its discontinuance is still regretted by them and they will employ every effort to procure its restoration. A detailed examination of the Ryots' accounts for several years proved that they had participated to a very small extent only to the remission of revenue ostensibly granted to them, and that nearly the whole was swallowed up by the Circar servants. I shall resume a consideration of this subject which is of great importance in the revenue arrangements of Travancore. The public officers instead of keeping their accounts in the manner which I have described, allowed them to fall into confusion, the Ryots who in Travancore are almost universally unable to read or write, depended entirely upon the revenue accountants for a knowledge of their annual rents and the balances which they owed the Circar, they seldom received receipts for their payments, these were not entered in the accounts, and they had to pay their rents several times over. The Circar servants embezzled the revenues at their pleasure, and exhibited nominal arrears against the Ryots; nor were they in any respect apprehensive of the consequences of their misconduct; for the Dewan never made a tour of the country nor entered into a detailed examination of the accounts of each District which would have detected some of the frauds that had been committed; and the only mode adopted of disposing of the balances against the Ryots was from time to time to cancel and remit them altogether by public proclamation—A single copy only of the Oloogoo or Revenue Survey, and of the ackut or revenue settlement was in existence and that copy was lodged with the Proworttecars and their accountants, the lowest rank of revenue servants. The Oloogoo ackut were the most important revenue records in the country, they are continually referred to for the determination of disputes regarding landed property among the Ryots who often lost their deeds and other documents and they were the principal means by which the right of the Rajah to his personal dominions could be substantiated. All the influences of bribery and corruption, or affection and enmity were

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continually at work in altering and exterpolating the single copy of the Oloogoo and ackut in the possession of the Proworttecars. Circar lands were alienated and inserted as Jummum or Ootee or Canum, tenures of private property, and the lands of Ryots involved in dispute were inserted according to the interest or profit of the revenue servants. There was no hazard of these alterations being detected by the difference which they made in the total amount of the Jummabundy, for they were included in the nominal balances exhibited against the Ryots, or still more frequently in the annual remissions for deficient crops. The accounts of every district presented an immense mass of falsehood, fraud and intricacy: and one of my most arduous duties has been to restore them to order and correct arrangement. The inhabitants paid their land revenue in grain, and were obliged to pay ten percent above the rent, on account of future wastage, and nearly 30 or 40 percent in difference of measurement. The Circar gained little from the exactions, which were very much appropriated by the revenue servants. If the inhabitants cultivated in the fields sugar beanes, yams, sweet potatoes or any other articles besides paddy they were subjected to an additional and arbitrary assessment exclusive of the fixed land tax or rent. The Poorayadums or plantations of coconut and other trees constituted an important part of the cultivation of Travancore. These are surveyed every 12 or 15 years, the trees are numbered and classed, and rent of every plantation is determined upon a fixed and equitable principle. Coconut trees are formed into four classes: the first consisting of trees bearing each 65 or more branches or leaves is assessed at 4 chuckrums, or about a Madras single fanam each tree: the 2nd at 3 chuckrums, the 3rd at two chuckrums and the 4th at one chuckrum. This is the rent for gardens on Circar ground: and those which are private property pay one eighth, one sixth & ca., of the above rent, according to their respective tenures. A prime coconut tree will yield a profit of about half a pagoda annually: and the rent of the plantations would be exceedingly low indeed, if collected with fairness and equity. But the same abuses prevailed here as in the other branches of the land revenue, excepting in this particular, that as the rent of the plantations was paid in money no excess could be collected as in the cases of grain on account of difference in measurement.

The monopolies, customs and commercial concerns of the Circar were placed under a separate set of officers governed by a chief named Pepper Survaddy Karigar; and these branches of revenue occasioned greater hardships if possible to the people than the land revenues.

The whole produce of the soil may indeed be affirmed to have been engrossed by the Government for a most inadequate share of its value. The country supplies annually about 4,000 candies of pepper monopolized by the Circar at the nominal price of 30 Cutcha Rupees paid to the Ryots, and sold until within the last seven years at 120 Company's Rupees for candy. I say the nominal price because the cultivators seldom received the half of it at the several stations for receiving and weighing the pepper, there was no fixed metal weights on measures, large stones chosen at pleasure were employed by the Circar servants as weights; and the loss to the inhabitants in weighing was never less than 50 or 60 percent. They seldom received the price of pepper in ready money but were allowed an equivalent reduction from their rents, or supplied with Funcas or order in the rents of some of their neighbours. The most inquisitorial system was adopted to prevent the smuggling of pepper: an establishment of peons was maintained for that purpose with authority to enter and search houses at pleasure, and smuggling was punished with death or the mutilation of limbs. The inhabitants would have witnessed with pleasure the destruction of every pepper vine in their country. From ten to twelve thousand chippums of betel-nut of 150 pounds each were collected annually from the inhabitants for 2 Pagodas, and sold to the Tinnevelly and Madura merchants at 11 and 12 Pagodas for chippum. The Elevars and Shanars were forced to supply the Circar with 1000 candies of coir rope annually at the price of 8 Rupees for candy and it was usually sold by the Circar for 45 or 50 Rupees each candy. Ginger and turmeric which grow with great luxuriance in Travancore were monopolized by the Circar, about 400 candies of the former article were collected annually at 17 Rupees per candy, and sold at 70 Rupees, about 50 candies of the latter at 12 Rupees and sold at 40 Rupees per candy. Cardamoms, Cassia, wild Cinnamon, and great other articles were monopolized, on terms equally profitable to the Circar. Teak wood was also monopolized by the Rajah. But by one of these blunders so common in the whole system of Travancore management it was far less profitable to the Circar than to a set of contractors. The forests were rented for a certain period of time and a specific sum to contractors, who were at liberty to cut down as many trees as they could during the period of their contract. It was only the want of capital and enterprize that prevented them from completely exhausting the forests without any additional profit to the Circar: and it was they who cut down and removed trees to the value of 10 times the amount of their rent. The Dewan and public servants had their share of the profits: a principle which pervaded every branch of the administration—not only teak

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timber but all forest trees were considered as the property of the Circar, and no inhabitant was allowed to fall or remove a tree of any kind without special permission. The quantity of salt manufactured in Travancore, is equal to the consumption of the country for 5 or 6 months only and this was monopolized by the Circar, retailed to the people at a high price and until it was disposed of no other salt was allowed to be sold. The public servants combining with the merchants sold foreign with the Circar salt, and the sale of the latter was prolonged for 9 or ten months and some times throughout the year. In this manner the inhabitants suffered all the inconveniences of a complete monopoly, and the Circar attained none of its advantages. These as usual were shared by the confederacy of the public servants. From Cape Comorin to Anjengo, Tinnevelly tobacco is used in Travancore, and Ceylon tobacco from Anjengo to the northern frontier. Of the former kind 1500 candies are consumed annually and before I took charge of the administration, this quantity was procured from Tinnevelly through the means of a Company of Chethes at Cottar in Travancore at the price of 38 Pagodas per candy, including customs and carriage. I considered this price to be very high, and in the first year of my administration invited proposals by public advertisements for the supply of that article. The Chethes had however the address to prevent any offer from being made. In the next year I dessolved the contract with the Chethes which was only from year to year and sent agents to Tinnevelly district to purchase the tobacco for the Circar. They delivered the whole quantity of Cottar after paying the expense of carriage and the same duties paid hy the Chethes at the price of 15 Pagodas per candy, making a difference of 18 Pagodas on each candy and of 27,000 Pagodas on the whole quantity. Thus in the simple business of buying 1502 candies of tobacco from Tinnevelly to the South of Travancore there was a fraud, I may call it so of 27000 Pagodas annually, and there has been effected a saving within four years of more than a lac of Pagodas. The Chethes had also the retailed sale of the tobacco in Travancore, from which they derived great profits–so obvious and enormous a fraud could have proceeded only from the general connivance of the Dewan and other principal public servants; and I have been assured from the best authority that they all shared in the Chethes' profits, the Dewan receiving atleast thousand two hundred Pagodas annually. I have here anticipated subsequent part of my report in order to shew more clearly the nature of the former Government in this country. 2000 candies of Ceylon tobacco are used in Travancore, there were abuses formerly in its purchase also: but the Ceylon Government have undertaken the disposal of it into their own hands and sell it to Travancore at the high price of 33 Pagodas per candy. It is retailed at about double that price. The tobacco monopoly has been retained in Travancore, and compensated by its increased revenue the less sustained in abolishing all the other monopolies. Cotton is not produced in Travancore and every principle of political economy demanded that its importation should be freed from all restrictions. Its exclusive sale was however, fared to a contractor at 30 Rupees per candy and he found it more profitable to sell a small quantity to a very high price, than to increase his payments to the Circar by large importations. Such of the proceedings of Travancore as were not monopolized by the Circar were burdened with duties nearly equivalent in their effect to a monopoly. Rice, fruits, vegetable, coconuts, oil, clothes, and in fact every article of use or commerce, paid a duty varying according to the distance it was carried of from ten to sixty and sixty percent on an arbitrary valuation. At each stage of 8 or 10 miles a separate body of customs of 8 or 10 percent was established and framed by auction to a contractor, who was very much at liberty to demand what he pleased. Thus a piece of cloth made at Cottar, the principal weaving village in Travancore, was subject in being carried to Trivandrum to six separate demands for duty amounting whole 35 percent. Besides the custom stations framed to contractors which were spread over the whole face of the country, the Circar established a secret levy of duty by its own servants at the principal commercial towns such as Alleppe & ca. The latter duties were called Meyllabumon or additional impost and varied from two percent at Alleppe the Meyllabumon on the export of coconuts was 95 percent. I must still continue this disgusting detail of injustice and oppression. There are forty Ootparahs or public caravanseries established in Travancore, at which all Bramins with their families and all religious pilgrims are plentifully fed for the term of three days each at public expense, all the Bramins at Trivandrum are supplied with food by the Circar: four great annual festivals take place at Trivandrum and considerable festivals at all other Pagodas at which Bramins are fed with all the delicacies of the country, and gratified with presents of money, clothes, and other articles. The immense quantities of provisions of rice, fruits, milk, ghee & ca. required for the use of these establishments and for the waste that they occasion was collected from the inhabitants according to a fixed distribution, at prices determined forty or fifty years ago, and not in general equal to a third part of the value of the supplies; under the pretext of supplying the Pagodas and Ootparahs, the public servants deprived the inhabitants at their pleasure of their best fruits and provisions for a very inadequate

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compensation if any indeed should be given. Besides these hardships the Nairs are compelled to carry the provisions thus supplied from all the parts of the country to the Pagodas, the Ootparahs and principally to Trivandrum which seems to absorb more than all the rest. For this labour the hire allowed is quite insufficient. Happily for the lower classes they are debarred the privilege of contributing their provisions and labour for the use of the Bramins. But they suffer sufficiently in other respects, they are obliged to furnish *gratis* provisions for the public elephants amounting in number to 250, and also Iraves, materials and labour for the construction of such temporary buildings as Circar may have occasion to erect. I am far from disposed to exaggerate the evils suffered by the people under the former Travancore Government and the details which I have given are founded upon evidence and facts. In the course of my journeys in Travancore I always communicated fully with people, and endeavoured to learn their sentiments and opinions. Last year at Neatungury a town 12 miles south of Trivandrum on the occasion of the Ryots of the district being assembled to receive their Puttiams for their gardens recently surveyed, I enquired fully tnto their circumstances and situation, an old man who had held the office of Ezaman under the Rajah came forward and in the presence of more than 2000 persons gave so full, distinct, connected and accurate an account of their former hardships, and the relief from them lately experienced that I am as induced to request that it might be committed to writing in his own words. It corresponds in every point with all the information derived from every other authentic sources.

I shall proceed after the foregoing feeble and imperfect sketch of the former system of Government in Travancore, to delineate the nature and result of the remedies that have been applied for the reformation of the principal defects and abuses that prevailed in that country.

The account which I have given appears to prove that the severe and oppressive character of the Government of Travancore originated as much in the confederacy and bold inequity of the public servants as in the tyranny of the Rajah. Organized more on principles of military subordination than of civil polity, they were able with impunity to defraud their sovereign and oppress his subjects and actuated by uniform maxims of interest and combination, there was little prospect of their renouncing the system of conduct which they had pursued while they could retain the same constitution. It was extremely desirable to communicate a pacific disposition to the Government and the people of

Travancore, but the strict gradation of authority established among the Karigars, and the entire command which they possessed over the services of the people contributed to perpetuate military feelings in the country and to facilitate the means of commotion and insurrection. They were in fact at once military and civil governors exercising absolute power within their districts. The investisure of their office was given by the Rajah with a sword and this weapon together with the ensigns of their office were carefully displayed wherever they appeared. The unlimited powers exercised by the Karigars were peculiarly liable to abuse in their capacity of revenue servants. In absolute Governments the conduct of the revenue servants requires generally to be observed with more jealousy and vigilance than that of the public functionaries. The constant and authoritative intercourse which they have with the people touching their property and interest gives them an influence, which if strengthened by the power of a magistrate or judge, will assuredly be perverted by the native of India to purposes of corruption and injustice. The authority of the Karigar enabled them to prosecute the system of rapine, fraud, and coercion which I have described, and it was essential to the purity of the revenue administration of the country that, they should be divested of the magisterial functions which they possessed. But the views which I have stated could not be accomplished by any half measures. They could be accomplished only by reducing the Karigars merely to the office of revenue servants, and depriving them of all direct authority over the persons or property of the people. It was in vain to hope that the Karigars would relinguish their habits of command, and controul, while they possessed the means of pursuing them. Persons hereafter appointed to that office would always aspire to follow the example of their predecessors and there was no method of preventing the undue exercise of the Karigars' power but by depriving them of that power altogether. The gradation of rank among the Karigars opposed considerable obstacles to the efficient execution of their duties, an order disagreeable to the Karigars was seldom enforced; it was sent from the Wallee Survaddy Karigars to their Survaddy Karigars with a private instruction to disobey it, and it was conveyed from the Survaddy Karigars to the Karigars, and from the Karigars to the Proworttecars, with a similar request. If called to account these officers asserted that they had transmitted the order and laid the blame of disobedience on their inferiors, and it was difficult to examine and punish two or three hundred Proworttecars. But any order favourable to the feelings or wishes of the Karigars was carried into effect with the promptitude of military obedience. In fact responsibility could not be fixed they had

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a kind of military constitution without the laws, sanctions and discipline which prevented it from degenerating into anarchy and misrule. In pursuance of these considerations the Karigars have been gradually deprived of all direct authority over the people, and reduced to the situation of collectors, or rather receivers of the revenue, the office of Wallee Survaddy Karigars have been abolished, together with their correspondent accountants, a Kariagar under the title of Tahsildar has been retained at the head of every Mundaputwasel or District with an accountant denominating Sumpreddy Pillah and having a certain number of Proworttecars under him. This plan admitted of no evasion in complying with orders and the duties of the Tahsildars being confined solely to the collection of the land revenue are executed with more efficiency. The influence of names is considerable and the discontinuance of the title of Karigars will be attended with advantage.

For the administration of justice hitherto confided to the Karigars a judicial establishment consisting of a Court of Appeal and eight Zillah Courts were formed. It was not to general reasonings of speculative opinions that this establishment owed its use, but to a practical experience of the absolute want of it when I took charge of the administration. I heard the complaints of the people every day, and they crowded to me in thousands with representations of the most serious injuries. I sent them in vain to the Karigars, with respects and strict injunctions for the investigation and redress of their grievance they returned me continually with reports of the unutility of my orders. It was a new thing to see a person in the situation of Dewan hear all complaints and the people when they appeared to exult in the hope of atlength detaining justice were told by the Karigars, "the Resident may hear your complaints but he must refer their investigations and redress to us, and we shall know how to dispose of them." The Karigars evidently obstructed by every means in their power the course of justice. In criminal matters the case was still worse. Malefactors guilty of robbery, murder & ca. were apprehended every day and the question as to the mode of their trial and punishment was forced on my decision. The Karigars if allowed to punish them would occasionally sacrifice the innocent to their vengeance and stupidity: if the Rajah or the Resident to order their punishment on the report of the Karigars, the case would be equally bad, to send a special commission for their trial would involve and less labour, for a dozen special commissioners must be sent out every day to different parts of the country. The introduction of a regular and permanent judicial establishment, composed of the most learned and respectable Nairs and

Bramins in the country supplied with liberal salaries, acting according to the Hindoo Shasters to receive wages and such fixed rules not inconsistent with the Shasters as the Rajah might prescribe and having no other duties but those of justice, promised productive of the most salutary and beneficial consequences. The people received the Courts with marked demonstrations and joy and crowded to them for justice with an impatience proportionable to the delays and vexations that they had hitherto experienced in seeking it. No other limits with respects to entertaining old causes assigned to the Courts than what is prescribed by the Shasters: but they were prohibited from receiving any suit already decided upon by competent authority, because every Government must as general principle confirm the acts of the proceedings of Government for a different rule would produce utmost confusion. The Courts were at first composed of a Nair judge and of two Shastrers or Pundits, but one of the Shastrers was afterwards discontinued and replaced by a Christian judge, and the Courts now consist of a Nair or first judge, a Christian or second judge, and a Shastrers, the decision being determined by a majority of those persons. The appointment of a Christian judge is important to the ends of justice, by its checking the partiality of the Nairs and Bramins, it is useful in ensuring protection and support before the Courts to the Christians, lower classes and is also useful in serving as a channel of direct communication between the Courts and the Resident. The nomination of a Christian judge was received with satisfaction by the Bramins and Nairs from its tendency to ensure just and impartial decisions. The salary allowed to the judge is liberal, but I have not been able to procure persons properly qualified for the duties of that office and if some of the gentlemen who come out as missionaries could be induced to accept it, that measure would confer more solid, substantial and important benefits on Travancore than any other that I can contemplate. The Courts have been attended with every gratifying results in Travancore, they have given security of person and property, and confidence to the mass of the people, and have contributed to diffuse the satisfaction and content which now prevail generally in that country. They ensure the inestimable privilege of patient and deliberate hearing of both parties, an advantage previously little known in Travancore, where the accused was seldom heard on his defence. Suits against the Circar entertained by them in common with those between private individuals and the Rajah lately lost a cause to one of his subjects to the amount of 30000 Rupees, which was immediately paid. The only complaint made against the Courts is that of delay, this arises from the multiplicity of causes and the justice of their decrees

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is seldom impeached, as their proceedings are conducted with great publicity, and the evidences except in very trifling causes recorded at length, and sent with the decree to the Court of Appeal—murders, robberies, and other great crimes frequent in Travancore, before the institution of the Courts have almost ceased.

The Courts during the first year of their proceedings sentenced to death several Nairs of high rank for atrocious and cruel murders, which under old system would have passed unnoticed and the sentences were regularly executed. These crimes which have uniformly been treated by the Courts with the same severity, have decreased every year and are now rarely known. The Police and the Courts have brought to light all the crimes committed in the country, formerly they were generally concealed from the Dewan and the Rajah. Suicide is more common in Travancore than almost in any other country. Instances of it occur continually from sickness or pain, disappointed pursuits, domestic quarrels, or lassitude of life. Perhaps in Travancore the moisture of the climate, the clouded atmosphere, and sequestered scenery may produce a melancholy temper of mind and the domestic institutions of the people afford few ties to attach them to existence. The suicides usually leave olahs giving an account of their motives, one young man who had no relation but his mother hung himself on her death, another went and hung himself because he quarreled with his sister, another because he was sick and friendless, but in the account of their motives it is remarkable that jealousy or disappointed love is never mentioned. The institutions of the Nairs appear to have banished those passions. By none is private dearity so little practised as by the Nairs, they seem to consider the public allowance to Bramins as a dispensation to themselves from all anxiety and charity. Their rapine and exactions are incited by pure avarice, they desire money in order to hoard and not to use it. But their indolence is greater than their avarice. To gain money by fraud and violence they are prompt and ready, but by labour and industry slow and unwilling.

During the former Government all police duties were executed by the Karigars by means of the militia, a body of about 50000 men, holding lands and always ready for employment, of the regular troops who were distributed over the country and of their own revenue establishments of peons, but the suppression of the militia, the dismissal of the troops and the necessity which existed of diverting the Karigars of all direct authority over the persons of the people rendered it requisite that separate Police Establishment should be

formed. These considerations had indeed been felt before my arrival in Travancore and I find a Police Corps of about 200 men already organized notwithstanding the urgent reasons which existed for the strictest economy; it was found undispensably necessary to augment their body to about 650 men for the purpose of maintaining the order and peace of the country. The police are independent of the revenue and judicial department and act under the immediate orders of the Dewan. They are distributed over the districts, and apprehend robbers murderers or other criminals, they send to the Courts all parties and witnesses summoned to appear before them, they receive the decrees of the Courts and in concert with the Tahsildars carry them into effect, they take into custody on the application of the Tahsildars all revenue defaulters, furnish escorts with remittances of money to the Treasury, attend the march of troops and furnish them with supplies, and in general execute under the separate orders of the Dewan—all duties connected with the internal security and peace of the country. Amongst the inhabitants no institutions for the performance of police duties existed, there was no establishment similar to that of the conductor peons in Mysore: the militia was maintained principally as a military body for the defence of the state, and when they suppressed, a measure on political grounds highly proper, the introduction of a body of police became indispensably requisite in a country occupied by a factious and turbulent population kept in controul hitherto by the most despotic exercise of arbitrary power.

The arrears due by the inhabitants, and the amount of embezzlements exhibited in the amounts against the revenue officers until the end of 1808, or the date of the termination of the war were concluded by public proclamation—the arrears of the inhabitants thus remitted amounted to 22 lacs 41827 Rupees and were in reality due by the revenue officers for the greatest portion of them had been collected from the people, and embezzled. The separate amount exhibited in the accounts against the revenue officers and cancelled was 4,68,351 Rupees, and it sufficiently proved the relaxed nature of a Government that allowed its revenue servants to plunder it openly and with impunity, to so great an extent, notwithstanding the annual abatement of revenue that were made Preachettum and Poorshandrum, or the arbitrary imposition of fines, and the tax on inheritance, were abolished forever. In order to prevent the great losses sustained by the inhabitants from the measurement of their grain and the unauthorized demands form a stage, a money rent was established on a most equitable and moderate principle to the great relief and satisfaction of the people.

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The price then fixed has continued unchanged and usually below the average market prices. The additional assessments levied on the cultivation of sugar canes, yarn, fruits and other edibles, were abolished and taxes were allowed to be demanded excepting the fixed rent of the land. Rice and grain of every description, plantains and all other fruits, yams and every kind of edibles were declared to be free from customs or duties of any kind.

The cultivation of plantains, a plant that according to Humbolat Draens, gives nourishment from the soil for the support of man than any other, and to which the climate of Travancore is peculiarly favourable, has increased to a surprizing extent inconsequence of these regulations, and there is scarcely a cottage in the country, that is not surrounded by a plantain garden previously to the approach of the Morajebhum, a festival, celebrated at Trivandrum every fifth year with enormous expenses at which all Namboory Bramins and Potties of Tuloonad, Malabar, Cochin and Travancore are sumptuously feasted for 40 days, it was formerly necessary to issue strict orders for the additional cultivation of plantains, but at the last Morajebhum which occurred two years ago, although a greater number of Bramins were assembled than at any former period, no previous notice for the increased cultivation of plantains was necessary and the enormous number required was procured in abundance without difficulty. A detailed examination and settlements of the Ryots' accounts from the year 1808. The period to which the remission of arrears extended, was undertaken, and I shall not attempt to give my description of the arduous and irritating nature of that labour. Its progress was approved by a general conspiracy of the revenue servants, by a combination of all the fraud, art and ability which they possessed. It was at length however completed, the accounts including the arrears, the annual rents and the lands of every individual Ryot were adjusted and Puttahs describing these details were issued. The examination of the accounts shewd that the revenue of the inferior and poor Ryots were collected punctually, and that the arrears exhibited on the Books consisted of the rents of the rich and powerful inhabitants and of the balances appropriated by the revenue servants in Travancore to be eradicated for some years, at present they cannot oppress or injure the inhabitants but they appropriate the collections and exhibit them as arrears, and although their frauds are detected on every detailed examination of the accounts, till the universality of the offence seems to encourage their hopes of its impunity. The remissions claimed by the cultivators or rather by the Circar officers on account of deficient crops

or as they termed it "Ters Teema" demanded mature deliberation. The rents are so low and the season so regular and favourable in Travancore that it seemed ridiculous to grant remissions in any case excepting a very unusual one of a failure in the annual rains. The manifest tendency of the remissions supposing they went to the inhabitants to promote indolence and to diminish produce of the land which it is the first maxim of political economy to increase by every possible means sufficiently shewd inexpediency of continuing them. The people had recently received great benefits in the establishment of a money rent, the discontinuance of all the duties and taxes on grains and fruits, the abolition of Preachettum and Poorshandrum, and the remission of their old arrears. But the Ryots were in such a state of discouragement and degradation from long and severe oppression that still greater favours deemed necessary in order to rouse them to exertion and a due sense of their own interests until the period of time should evince at which the industry and active labours of the people should be founded upon a conscious security of their persons and property under a mild and just administration of the laws, it seemed to be requisite that their endeavours to ameliorate their own condition should continue to be excited by every possible concession of revenue that could be made to them consistently with the interest of the state. On these grounds it was determined in place of the usual and fluctuating remissions on account of Ters Teema to allow a fixed deduction for two years of 20 percent from the rent of all Circar or Patum lands, which constitute the greatest portion of the lands in Travancore. This deduction was entered in the Puttiams of the inhabitants and clearly explained throughout the country. It considerably exceeds any remission for "Ters Teema" that ever reached them but it cruelly disappoints the avarice of the revenue servants and with them is constant topic of inactive and clamours. To the private proprietors of land, who paid only about 3 or 4 percent of its produce to the Government, it was evidently unnecessary to grant any deduction although they also had participated in the former remission of 'Ters Teema'. In Travancore besides innumerable private temples, there are 400 Pagodas belonging to the Circar and endowed with lands, the property of the Rajah, yielding revenue of about 3 lacs of Rupees. The revenues of the Pagoda lands although under the general controul of the district Karigars; were managed from motives of respect towards the Idols by a separate set of Circar servants, and were not included in the general revenues of the country. The Pagoda revenues which ought to have been applied to the repair of the temples, and the performance of religious ceremonies, were almost entirely engaged by the revenue and Pagoda servants. The enormity of

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these abuses was quite incredible, the temples were in ruins, their ceremonies utterly neglected and the Bramins, Nairs and other officers attached to them not only swallowed up their revenues but sold and alienated their lands. Examples of the same conduct occurred in every department not only falsehood fraud and extortion, but impiety, profamation and sacrelege seemed familiar to most of the public servants in the country. There is scarcely a Pagoda in Travancore that has not been repeatedly robbed not only of its revenues but of its religious ornaments, and even its Idols by Bramins and Nairs. The Courts convict and punish these criminals but Bramins are exempted from capital and corporal punishment and they avail themselves of the immunity. Only a few weeks ago a gold idol in one of the principal temples was furloined, and attempted to be sold by the Brahmin priest. The flagrant abuses in the Devastanum lands rendered it necessary to transfer them to the more direct management of the Circar revenue officers, the allowances proper to be alloted for religious and other ceremonies at all the temples were determined upon a large and liberal scale by a committee of learned Bramins and they been regularly remitted every month in advance from the public treasury. The ceremonies are now performed with order and propriety although still perhaps not to the full extent of the means assigned to them. The Devastanum lands and accounts have been incorporated with those of the districts and the Circar has derived a profit of about 40,000 Rupees annually from the transfer. I derived the most sincere satisfaction from succeeding in carrying into effect the abolition of the heavy capitation tax, and the oolgiam or forced labour imposed upon the Christians, Shanars, Elwars, and other classes of the inferior inhabitants. This measure, which has permanently attached to the British interests a body of 50,000 industrious people, was resisted by all the superior officers of the Rajah's Government, and was finally carried into effect only through the humane and considerate character of the late Raunee. Every arrangement that I adopted in Travancore was first submitted and carefully explained to the Raunee and was not carried into execution, until it had received her deliberate approbation and sanction. The emancipation of the Shanars, and Elwars, although openly opposed by the principal officers of the palace and the Government was decidedly approved by the Raunee, on grounds which evinced equally her judgement and humanity. Its execution has placed those people upon the same footing with the other subjects of the state; and they have not ceased to express their gratitude for their liberation from a condition of cruel subjection and servitude. A revenue of about a lac of Rupees was resigned; but it will soon be more than compensated by

the increased industry of those people. A heavy tax upon the nets of fishermen was also abolished at the same time, a measure of benevolence and equity. The Rajah was the general merchant of his country, he not only monopolized all its valuable productions, but established commercial stations called "Catcherums" at the principal towns where articles were purchased and sold with "the spirit of a Huckster" (Orme). This system so contrary to all the principles of good Government, so fatal to the prosperity of the country and so little conducive even to the advantage of its revenue was after full consideration abolished. The Catcherums, and most of the monopolies connected with them, were annulled and a progressive augmentation of revenue and resources has ensured. The betel-nut monopoly which had usually afforded a revenue of 3,50,000 Rupees annually was cancelled, and the inhabitants were not insensible of the obligation. The monopoly of coir rope which bore hard upon the Elwars, and deteriorated the value of the Porayadums or plantations, was also relinquished. The importation and sale of cotton was freed from every restriction excepting a low frontier duty. The monopolies of ginger, turmeric and cardomoms were also abolished. The people were declared to be at liberty to collect and dispose of all the hill articles formerly engrossed by the Circar, and also to fell and remove at their pleasure all kinds of forest trees, with the exception of teak wood which continued to be reserved by the Circar. The abolition of the commercial and monopolizing system of the Rajah's Government did not result from a precipitate adoption of the principles of the economists, but from a mature consideration, and I believe an accurate perception of the immediate and remote interests of that state. While Malabar continued under the dominion of Tippoo Sultan, or in a situation of internal warfare, while the resources of Ceylon were imperfectly developed, the Rajahs of Travancore and Cochin might with some appearance of advantage pursue a system of monopoly and royal commerce, but Malabar under its recent rapid improvements entirely supplants the commerce of Travancore with Bombay; both from its comparative contiguity and having only one set of duties instead of two to pay and Ceylon has the same advantage with respect to Travancore on the Coromandel Coast and at Madras. The royal commerce and monopolies of Travancore not only destroyed the prosperity of the country but in the course of a short time, much have succumbed altogether under the more favourable circumstances of the neighbouring countries. Although the teak forests were nearly exhausted by the contractors and presented scarcely more than the debris of their former state, yet the sale of teak timber under the active

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exertions of Lt. Gordon, has produced a lac and a half of Rupees instead of 50,000 for which the forests had previously been rented. The sale of pepper was from several reasons retained by the Circar, but its price to the inhabitants was incrased from 30 Cutcha to 45 Company's or 50 Cutcha Rupees, metal weights and measures properly stamped were sent to all the weighing stations, and effectual means were adopted to ensure to the inhabitants the immediate payment in ready money of their pepper. The monopoly of salt was modified in a manner that without increasing its selling price to the inhabitants augmented the revenue accruing from it from 25,000 to 2,30,000 Rupees. In the account of the Porayadums or plantations I omitted to state that exclusive of the fixed tax upon the trees an additional assessment was levied under the name of Shittoo Patum, for all trees from which toddy was extracted and this tax exceeding 18,000 Rupees annually has been abolished on the principle of giving the utmost possible encouragement and liberty to the industury and labour of the people.

Adequate prices rather above the usual market rates, have been fixed for the immense supplies required from the inhabitants for the use of the Pagodas and Ootparahs and they are procured according to an allotment regulated on the most equitable principles. Still it is difficult to prevent abuse altogether in the department. I have repeatedly desired the inhabitants themselves to devise a plan by which the supplies might be furnished but they have never been able to propose any amendment of the existing system. For the labours of carrying these supplies, and all other labour executed for the Circar, an increased hire has been established equal to what is usually allowed in the Carnatic supplies for the Rajah's elephants and the materials and labour furnished for the construction of buildings, are now paid for according to the average market rates, and the people are in no instance required to serve or supply the Circar on cheaper terms than they demand from private individuals. The former system of farming the land and sea customs, and all the high duties connected with it have been abolished. Custom houses under the direct management of public officers are established over the country, on all imports a single frontier duty only of 8 percent on a very low tariff is levied and on the productions of the country subject to customs, a single duty of 5 percent on a very low tariff also is only demanded. All articles for which a duty has been once levied are permitted to be carried to all parts of the country and exported without any further demand. Grains, fruits, vegetables, drugs & ca. are exempted from all duty. This regulation has been attended with the most beneficial effect on the interests

of the country. It has promoted its commerce in a great degree, and from the mutual re-action of trade and agriculture, has also materially benefited the husband man. The Bazar price of coconuts at Alleppie increased about 20 or 30 percent, immediately on the promulgation of the new arrangements. The amount realized by the Circar on account of customs is about the same that was formerly collected not withstanding the great reduction on the duties. In my report on the Establishment of the Courts I stated that their expense would be nearly met by a tax upon spirituous liquors but it was for sometime necessary to postpone the introduction of the impost. The Shanars and Elwars, who were the manufacturers and vendors of arrack, were reduced to so low a state of misery and wretchedness by the capitation taxes and oolgiams or forced labour, that it would have been almost inhuman to burden with taxation, the principal means of their livelihood. But when they had recovered in some degree from their extreme depression a tax on arrack and toddy became extremely necessary from higher considerations than those of finance. Habits of intoxication already too prevalent among the people became on the gradual improvement of their circumstances so general as to demand a check. Nairs and Bramins, Mussalmans, Shanars, Elwars, and even the women indulged in the intemperate use of spirituous liquors. Arrack of a good quality was sold for a chuckram, or about a penny on bottle, and this extraordinary cheapness materially increased its expenditure among people, whose passions is avarice—An annual tax of about two Pagodas in every still, and a Pagoda on every arrack and toddy shop premises to produce a revenue of about a lac of Rupees, and it will not ofcourse fall upon the Elwars, and Shanars, but upon the consumers of the liquor. The exclusive sale of tobacco, has necessarily been retained, as the rsvenue from it could not be relinquished, without the utmost embarassment, and as its high price from its being an article of luxury does not produce an unfavourable operation on the industry or morals of the people. By vigilance and exertions in preventing smuggling the revenue arising from that source, has been increased from 5 to above 11 lacs of Rupees, and it will continue to augment. I was desirous of reducing the selling price to the people, but I was always afraid of meddling with a branch of revenue that prospered, and was of the greatest importance to the state.

Pursuant to the customs of the country a new survey of the Porayadums or plantations, became necessary and its execution has brought to light a mass of unexampled corruption and oppression that took place on the occasion of the last survey, which was made under the

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administration of Vally Tomby in 1803, the details of that survey and the issue of Poodoo Chitties or Puttiams in conformably to it were left to the uncontrouled discretion of the district Karigars and accountants, and were conducted with shameless contempt of all principles of public and private justice and rights. Some districts having bribed the Dewan's private servants, were through their influence exempted from a third or a fourth part of their proper assessment, while the surrounding districts, were allowed no abatement whatever of their rents. Gardens occupied by private individuals for 20 or 30 years, were forcibly transferred to the possession of men who had no right to them. Innumerable claims were determined by interests, favour and curruption, which appear to have been the only principles that were pursued for the adjustment of the various disputes that occurred. The execution of the survey occupied about two years, and the settlement of accounts consequent on it nearly the same period of time. The survey recently executed has conducted on very different principles. Accountants acting under the direct authority of the Dewan and the most full and precise instructions have been employed in surveying the plantations in conjunction with the district offices and committees of Ryots and in order to check their proceedings an additional survey of certain gardens taken at hazard in every district has been made by separate persons. The claims of private individuals have been ascertained with the utmost care previously to the preparations of the Poodoo Chitties or Puttahs. For that purpose four or five cutcheries composed of the ablest revenue servants in the country have been established at central situations where the right is clear and not contested the Puttahs are immediately prepared but all cases of dispute are carefully examined by the cutcheery assisted by deputations from the Courts, and are determined upon the oath of the neighbours and the best procurable written documents and records. If the parties should not acquiesce in their decision, they can bring the cause in a regular manner before the Courts but in general they are satisfied. On every principle of Government it was necessary to do away the inequality of rents introduced inconsequence of the undue influence exercised by Vally Tomby's confidential friends and to establish uniform principles of assessment. This endeavour at first encountered same oppositions from the districts formerly favoured but its equity and propriety has since been acknowledged by the people in general. The new survey was completed in less than six months and about the same time was necessary for the adjustment of the accounts. It has been attended with an augmentation of revenue to the amount of about a lac and a half of Rupees, occasioned less by an increase of plantations than by the fidelity of the survey. The Raunee has relinquished large

and vexatious fees in the issue of the Puttiams, and several other items collected on the occasion of the former survey.

I have described most of the arrangements executed under my superintendance, and their result has not disappointed my expectations. In the course of my proceedings the relief of the people and the benefit of the state were equally studied and pursued, concessions were made gradually, and in proportion to the improvement of their resources, and a progressive augmentation of revenues, has taken place. I encountered at first the most distressing difficulties from the sudden failure of some of the principal branches of revenue, the remissions, misconduct and frauds of the revenue servants, and the unexampled depreciation of pepper and other articles from the sale of which the revenues of the state had hitherto been chiefly realised. The tobacco and betel-nut contracts were given by Womana Tomby with my concurrence to Mrs. Top, a woman engaged on extensive commercial speculations, and recommended to me by Colonel Hall and other highest officers as a person of respectability and great property. She deceived them before she frauded the Circar, she was deeply involved in debt when she took the contracts and she deliberately violated them. She has been cast by a decision of the Provincial Court at Tellicherry in 70,000, Pagodas not one of which has been, or will be paid. The pepper in store was sold by Womanah Tomby to Jenarda Iyer, a Travancore merchant, who refused to pay for it, and has prosecuted the Resident for the means employed to procure the execution of his engagement. From the exhausted state of the Tinevelly and Madura districts inconsequence of decease and bad seasons, the Circar Betel-nut, formerly sold at a moment's notice, could not procure a purchase on any terms, and the war in Europe occasioned the small result with respect to its pepper. The exertions made in the other departments of the revenues were however attended with extraordinary success, and more than counter-balanced the deficiencies which I have described. In the Malabar year 983 the collections of the country under the entire management of Vally Tomby were 30,00,000 Rupees and the payments to the Company chiefly in pepper 6,78,000, in 985, entirely under Womanah Tomby the collections were 28,50,000 Rupees, and the payment to the Company 8,41,000, in 986 partly under Womanah Tomby, and partly under the Resident, the collections were 30,000 Rupees, and the payment to the Company is 11 lacs, in 987 entirely under the Resident, the collections were 35 lacs and the payment of the Company 16 lacs, in 988 under the Resident the collections were 34 lacs and the

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payment to the Company 12 lacs, and in 989 partly under the Resident and partly under the new Dewan the collections were 36 lacs, and the payment to the Company 11 lacs. At the first period the collections were 30 lacs aud the disbursements 29 lacs, at the second, the collections were 28½ lacs and the disbursement 28 lacs, at the thlrrd the collections were 34 lacs, and the expenses 34 lacs, and in the present year the collections will be 38 lacs, and the expenses about 30, leaving a clear annual surplus to the Rajah of 8 lacs of Rupees. Thus it appears that within 10 years an increase of revenue to the amount of 10 lacs, had taken place, and if to this amount shall be added 9 lacs relinquished in monopolies, capitation taxes, Poorshandrum & ca; it will appear that a difference in favour of the Circar to the extent of 19 lacs has been effected in that time. But from the amount must necessarily be deducted about 3 lacs for Devastanum revenue and half a lac on account of militia and other resumptions, leaving a balance of 14½ lacs and if a farther deduction of 8½ lacs be made on account of the increased sale, of tobacco, and there will still remain a difference of 6 lacs, and this difference has been realized to the Circar almost entirely by the suppression of the frauds, speculation and embezzlements of the great confederacy of public servants. That the public servants should receive liberal salaries is a rule that every person will approve, but that they should engross by a violation of every obligation of honour and virtue of duty to their sovereign and humanity to their fellow subjects so great a portion of the resources of the state is a practice too monstrous to be tolerated. Yet that was the practice pursued in Travancore, it is still regretted by the public authorities and will assuredly be restored unless the present system shall be steadily followed. It was the practice of oppression and speculation that rendered the whole body of public servants, and the Rajah himself, who was the head of the confederacy, so averse to the British alliance because they foreseen that its wise and equitable influence would sooner or later prove subversive of their whole system of inequity and injustice. Their maxim of the necessity of severity for the purpose of preventing rebellions, was probably an ostensible exercise for a plan of conduct which they could justify, neither to themselves or to others, a discontent, and impatience was generated by that system, which occasioned the several consecutive convulsions that have agitated this country and would still occasion the same consequences if the system itself had not been reformed. The respective interests and influences of the British Government, the Rajah, the public servants, and the people were at variance among themselves undefined and unsettled. I am persuaded

that neither Womanah Tomby, nor the late Rajah, had any serious intention to pay the debt to the Company. In the Malabar year 985, Womanah Tomby collected nearly 29 lacs of Rupees, an amount equal to the usual annual collection of Vally Tomby, yet although a reduction of 5 lacs of Rupees in the expenses of the country had taken place from the dismissal of the troops Womanah Tomby did not pay a Rupee of the arrears, he barely paid the current subsidy of 8 lacs, and neither he, or the Rajah give me any reason to expect greater efforts. It will be absurd that the revenues in consequence of the abolition of a number of harassing and burdensome imposts, are now reduced to 5 or 6 heads, moderate in their application to the people, and susceptible of increase with the augmented prosperity of the country. The revenue from land and gardens, formerly 9 lacs is now 15, from tobacco formerly 5 lacs is now 11, from salt formerly 30,000 Rupees is now 2,30,000, from land and sea customs formerly 2,30,000 with very high duties, is now about the same or 2,30,000, from timber formerly 50,000 now 1,50,000 and from extraordinaries about 2 lacs to the exclusion at present of contracts, monopolies, capitation taxes &ca–measures of coercion for the recovery of arrears are pursued when necessary by the authority of the Courts. The rents are generally so very low that, they are readily paid by the people on their accounts being settled-but increase of delay or contumacy-the Tahsildar makes an application to the police officer of the district who immediately imprisons the defaulter. If the latter resists the validity of the demand, the police officer is required to report the circumstance immediately to the Dewan who either calls on the Tahsildar for an explanation or desires the matter to be referred to the Courts. If the Rajah should acknowledge the justice of the demand and refuse to satisfy it he is transferred after a few days' confinement to the Circar Vakeel at the Court who institutes a process for the recovery of the arrears by sale of his property. This mode may appear slow and circuitous, but it was necessary to counteract the tendency of the former system which was that of violence and precipitate injustice. Excepting in one district, the Tahsildars have seldom occasion to send a Ryot to the police, and arrears are always found to result from the negligence, convenience or embezlement of the Tahsildars and their subordinate officers.

The great misfortune in the administration of Travancore, is the audacious, inordinate, and insensible dishonesty of the servants employed in the collection and disbursement of public money, the salaries of the revenue servants have been more than trebled, and exceed two fold those allowed in the Company's provinces, and they are

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subject to no deduction whatever on account of nuzzers. But this increase of salary has little effect in diminishing corruption and embezzlement and fraud whenever and to whatever extent there can possible be practised it seems a rooted principle that, no man can allow money to pass through his hands without retaining a portion of it, and although detection is near and executable, still the same determinated and irreclaimable spirit of public robbery prevails; the mass of corruption, the intricacy in which it is involved, and the minute ramifications to which it extends that are revealed on the examination of the accounts of a district, are of quite astonishing, and would scarcely be believed by a person even conversant in the habits of the natives in every other part of India. The formalities of the Courts although salutary and necessary, are attended with this inconvenience that they sometimes permit instances of extreme delinquency in public servants to remain too long unpunished. The evil is however diminished although its magnitude still occasions great inconvenience and embarrassment. Securities are always taken from the public servants, they are regularly sworn with every circumstance of solemnity, but no engagements or oaths seem to be of any avail in checking their uncontroulable capacity. They are said to have been infinitely worse under the former system, an assertion which I believe to be true, although it would scarcely seem credible to a person who should have an opportunity of knowing their actual misconduct. Good men are assiduously sought, for sometimes a person newly appointed to office manifests activity and honesty for two or three months but his principle invariably yield about that time to temptations by which he is enviorned under the former system. Every Kariagar had a treasury and the regular embezzlement of public money that took place under this arrangement, rendered it necessary to appoint a separate treasurer from the Government, in each district, for the care of the public money. But for some time this plan was negatory, the treasurer and the Tahsildar united their interests, the collections were embezzled as usual and even the sums issued in advance from the General Treasury for the Devastanum and Ootparah expenses, were sometimes either appropriated by those officers or sent back to the General Treasury as revenue, the religious establishments being in the meantime left without provision. At length Syrian Christians were appointed treasurers and the evil ceased instantly, a single Rupee was not disbursed afterwards without authority. The fearless inequity of the public servants is quite surprising, character is altogether disregarded, formerly a man was dismissed with disgrace one day, and appointed to a high office the next, interests and profits are the idols worshipped by the people, and they have not yet learned that honesty is the best means of propitiating them.

The above description applies particularly to the Southern part of Travancore, and the character of the people of the country improves sensibly as we advance to the North. In Cochin the Ryots are docile, honest and obedient in a high degree, compared with those of Travancore, the ignorance of the Travancoreans is remarkable, many of the Survaddy and Wallee Survaddy Karigars, formerly in office could neither read nor write and men have been recommended to me for the office of judge who could scarcely sign their names. I have established schools at the public expence in all the districts and they are numerously attended. If some tracts upon ethics and morals, would be translated in to Malayalam, and furnished for the use of these seminaries, they would be highly useful, for the people are entirely in want of every kind of moral instruction. Their idleness is extreme, they employ slaves, or hire Elwars, and Shanars for the labour of their fields, but they seldom put their hand themselves to the plough. Their ignorance and indolence render them restless, credulous and suspicious, easily misled by the bad and designing men among them. Their degradation in character and morals has been produced by a long course of despotism and tyranny, and will be removed by a mild, moderate, and just administration of the Government.

The several detailed reports which I have submitted to the Government regarding Cochin preclude the necessity of any explaining at any length, the measures adopted in that state. The administration of justice and the revenues was in the same state of derangement as in Travancore, and has been restored to order and efficiency by similar remedies to those resorted to in the latter country, the revenue officers in Cochin being now revenue servants only and not military and civil chiefs, execute their duties with punctuality for they are far superior in principle to the public servants in Travancore, and justice is distributed with impartiality and expediency. The difference in character between the two countries is shown by the state of their Courts; in Travancore, there are nearly six or seven hundred causes in arrear in every Court and about a hundred fresh causes are received every month, while in Cochin there are not more than 30 causes on the Register of any of the Courts nor above 20 received every month. The zealous and indefatigable exertions of the Assistant Resident have, advanced all the departments of the administration of Cochin, to a state of practical efficiency and have augmented its revenues from about 4 lacs of Rupees to 6 and a half. The people of Cochin are contended and satisfied, although they have

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eeceived much fewer benefits, than have been conferred on Travancore. The rents in Cochin augmented by Tippoo Sultan are more than double those established in Travancore, and have not been reduced by any abatement, and no monopolies of any extent have been abolished in the former country as very few existed in it. But the accounts have been adjusted, a mild equitable and efficient system of Government has been introduced, and the rapid improvement of the Cochin country in agriculture commerce and general prosperity has been conspicuous.

I shall beg permisson in this place to offer a few remarks in reply to the observations contained in the letter of the 10th August 1814 from the Honorable the Court of Directors regarding the system of meausures adopted in Travancore and my opinions, if they should differ from those stated by the Honorable Court result alone from the nearer view which I have been able to take of the situation and interests of this country. The knowledge formerly possessed by the British Government, of the internal affairs of Travancore, was necessarily imperfect, the British Residents seldom resided in that country and the late Resident notwithstanding the extensive information which he acquired on that subject shewed by the draft of regulations which he transmitted to the Government with his letter of the 8th January 1809, that he still misunderstood some of its details. The same remark applies to the report of the late Captian Arthur; it contains much correct and valuable information, but several particulars that are entirely erroneous. A plan of studied and jealous concealment was long pursued by the public authorities in Travancore, the late Resident, observed truly "It formed part of the system of concealment in Travancore for the officers of Government to transact all business in retired apartments the outer doors being kept shut, and opened only to a bribe", the inhabitants were deterred from manifesting their real opinions, and it was not until I received charge of the administration of affairs, that the character of the Government and the sentiments of the people could be truly ascertained.

The extraordinary obstacles that, I encountered in conducting the administration often rendered me sincerely desirous of being relieved from that charge, and it was only a sense of duty, and of the expediency of persevering in my efforts until the principal objects that I had in view, should be accomplished, that prevented me from asking permission to relinquish it. In these moments of difficulty, I felt and represented the reasons that recommended the appointment of a Native Dewan, with more force

than appeared on more mature reflection to belong to them. The passions prejudices and interests of the Karigars and other public authorities whose "undisguised corruption", I use the words of the late Resident, had nearly ruined the country were certainly adverse to the time of policy which I pursued, but the great body of the people uniformly testified strong marked and decisive demonstrations of satisfaction at my interposition, and its consequences. I mentioned repeatedly these facts to the Government and stated that although some public authorities, and higher classes were dissatisfied, the mass of the people were highly pleased at the course of measures pursued for the regulation of the Government. The Honorable Court appear to have considered the former system of administration by the Karigars, as not only moderate and equitable in itself, but agreeable to the people. With the grounds on which this opinion and the appellation of respectable applied to the Karigars, rest I am not acquainted but the respects of the late Resident are uniform in describing the Government of the Karigars as a system of unqualified ferocious and intolerable tyranny and my enquiries produced if possible still stronger impressions of that fact. The history of the Travancore Government, of its rebellions murders and atrocities sufficiently proved the vicious nature of its structure-Yet the Karigars were undoubtedly respectable in appearance and address, plausible, prepossessing and full of profession, but never almost has the wrath of heaven visited a country with such a course as was inflicted upon Travancore by the cruelty, tyranny, and capacity of these men. The inhabitants the moment they were at liberty to declare their sentiments rose in an insurrection of complaints against their rulers, the Karigars, and every measure adopted for the reduction of the power of these authorities has been approved and applauded by the great mass of the people. The Honorable Court have remarked that the assumption of the office of Dewan by the Resident "constituted such an accumulation of characters and authorities, in one and the same person as amounted to a subversion of all the fundamental principles that we have constantly inculcated" and the wise and excellent maxim stated in that paragraph, constituted the foundation of the measures that I adopted with respect to the Karigars. Everything of Government shewed that the powers concentrated in the Karigars could not be safely entrusted to any set of public authorities, even in the most virtuous community, and their tendency to abuse the extent to which they had been abused in Travancore, was obvious and undeniable.

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I shall beg leave to advert to some of the objections stated by the Honourable Court, to the assumption of the office of the Dewan by the Resident, to the establishment of the Courts and of the police. I have already described the reasons that rendered the temporary employment of the Resident in the charge of the administration adviseable and necessary. The union in one person of the several powers which he exercised was unquestionably a serious evil, on every principle of permanent arrangement, but the employment of the Resident as Dewan was a temporary expedient,only adopted in a moment of exigency, for the suppression of disorders, and the accomplishment of particular objects, and it was essential to the success of his measures in that capacity that, he should be vested with extraordinary powers. A Native Dewan should have exercised nearly the same powers; the additional authority of the Resident added but little force to the power hitherto exercised by the Dewan, for the administration of that office had been in a great degree despotic, and independent of the Resdent's control, and the question was reduced to this alternative, whether the same, or nearly the same power, should at a period of emergency be exercised by a Native Dewan, or by a Resident acting in the capacity of Dewan. Whoever was Dewan must have at that time held great authority in order to pay the debt and reform the abuses that existed, and I was convinced by the invariable example of former Dewans,by the character of the people, their habits of cruel despotism when in office, of intrigue, venality and pride, that the powers necessary at that time would be abused if confided to any native of Trancore, with whome I was acquainted. On a retrospect of events, I can with sincerity declare my conviction that if a Native Dewan had at that period been appointed, no part of the debt would have been now discharged nor any useful reform effected. The observations already offered seem to establish the necessity which existed for transfering the judicial powers exercised by the Karigars to other authorities but the Honorable Court appear to consider the general emloyment of Punchayats for the decision of causes as an arrangement preferable to the introduction of the Courts. No person entertained a more favourable opinion of Punchayats of the facility of their composition and the purity of their decision than I did, until I was obliged to examine closly the nature and usual effect of that instituiion and I admitted with reluctance, the conclusion forced upon my mind, by practical experience that, it was equally adverse to the spirit of Hindoo Jurisprudence and to the substantial ends of justice. The Code of Hindoo Law collectively denominated Shastre, which prescribes the mode and principles established among the people for the administration of justice, contains no mention as far as I can learn of Punchayats,but direct that justice shall be dispensed by the sovereign in person or by such authorities as he may depute for that purpose

that is by judges or Courts appointed by the supreme authority. This is the rule established by Manu by the Narada Maleka or Shastre of Laws compiled peculiarly for Malabar, by the Veganesur, Yogee Wulkudee&ca and although, arbitrators are mentioned in the Code of Hindoo Laws pub lished by Mr. Halhed in Bengal, the duties of assessors are almost invariably assigned to them. Abul Fazl in that portion of the Ayen Arkberry dedicated to a description of Hindoo Jurisprudence makes no mention of whatever of Punchayats but relates fully the qualifications, and duties of judges. In Travancore Punchayats were scarcely known and the experience of their utility in the cases referred to them, either at my request, or that of the people furnishes no reasons to desire their extended adoption. Bartalomeo, a man well acquainted with Travancore, in the chapter of his work describing the administration of justice in that country, makes no allusion to Punchayats but states that "Civil and criminal affairs are determined only by the king and his servants". Punchayats appear to have owed their origin in Hindoo communities to the conquest of the Mussalmans. The Kayrees appointed under the Mahomedan rule had little inclination to trouble themselves with the investigation of suits among the Hindoos, and the latter as little to refer their disputes to the deeision of the Koran. They therefore resorted to a system of decision by arbitrations as a substiute for a more authoritative and perfect mode of jurisprudence. The thousands of complainants who have come to me have always been offered and have usually refused, the option of deciding their cause by Punchayats, and the very few cases referred to that mode of determination, have fallen to the ground from the irreconciliable contrariety in the opinions of members of the Punchayat. The parties in choosing their arbitrations will select persons determined right or wrong to support their cause, the umpire what ever may be the merits of his decision, is accused of bribery and the whole proceeding is involved in suspicion. If the Circar officer appoints the whole Punchayats, their decision will be conformable to his wishes and his wishes too often to the interest of the person who offers the highest bribe. If the headmen of villages constitute the Punchayats there is very little difference between these fixed judges and the judges appointed by the sovereign, different excepting that the former are generally more deficient in knowledge character and principle, ability and impartiality. The natives at least in Travancore want that confidence in each others probity which is necessary to qualify them for composing or obeying Punchayats. The superior education, knowledge, rank and ability of the judges in a Court together with the solemnity of the proceedings awe a native conscious of having a bad cause into submission: but before a Punchayat consisting of his equals, he will litigate without bounds. The judicial

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regulations published on the formation of the Courts offered the inhabitants a choice of trial by Punchayat, but their general disinclination to adopt that mode of decision, and its inefficiency in most cases wherein it was adopted prevented its extended use. and rendered it necessary that suits in general should be tried by the Courts. These have been increased in number to 8, they are situated generally within less than 20 miles from the extremities of their jurisdictions, the inhabitants find no inconvenience whatever in repairing to them, and they have given a security to the persons, property and rights of the people of which they abundantly appreciate the importance. There is no village police in Travancore, the reduction of the militia and troops deprived the local authorities of the usual means of maintaining peace, and the establishment of a separate police was found requisite before my arrival in the country. It was deemed more adviseable to plan that establishment under the immediate controul of the Dewan, than under the revenue servants with whose duties it was not necessary connected.

An important and highly beneficial change in the constitution of the Courts has been adopted by Her Highness the Raunee and Regent. They are at first placed under the authority of the Dewan, and were superintendend, while I held that office, with all the attention and impartiality of which I was capable. But on the appointment of a Native Dewan it soon became evident that endeavours would be exerted to render the Courts subservient to his power, interest, and views and the people in general were alarmed least the principal safeguard of their rights, should be converted into an instrument of oppression. The deceased Dewan, Davan Pudbanaben, abstained from all interference with the Courts. The next Dewan Shengoo Annavee, endeavoured in some occasions to influence their decisions, but his successor Ramayan Narrain scarcely disguised his design to establish a complete ascendancy over their proceedings. The consequence was a suspension of several important suits, the Courts resisted a direct compliance with his wishes, but from motives of respect they would not pass decrees in direct opposition to them. The Raunee inconsequence of these inconveniences removed the judicial establishment from the controul of the Dewan, and placed it under the immediate authority of the Rajah, a measure which promotes the independence of that establishment and is regarded with extreme satisfaction by the people. The Courts are superintended by the Court of Appeal, which reports direct to the Rajah, and issues orders to the others. Circar Vakeels have been attached to all the Courts, they serve as channels of communication between the executive authority and the Courts, and prosecute all offenders against the

Government or peace of the country. The Government is divided into two great departments, under the direct authority of the Rajah; the executive administered by the Dewan and judicial superintended by the Court of Appeal. This system is attended with the best effects and is in no respect hostile to the efficient conduct of affairs.

I can review with satisfaction, the general result of my administration in Travancore. The accounts of the inhabitants have been adjusted: their rents have been fixed and defined, a considerable and permanent abatement of land tax has been granted for the encouragement of industry, and all additional and arbitray assessments on the land have been abolished. The vexatious and ruinous taxes of Preachettum and Poorshandrum, together with the capitation taxes have been suppressed, all monopolies of the produce of the country have with the exception of pepper been annulled, the price of pepper has been increased from 30 to 50 Rupees per candy to the inhabitants, and the people are now at liberty to trade with that exception in all the productions under the operation of a free competition, are highly beneficial to agriculture and the general prosperity of the state. The land and the sea customs have been reduced to a low standard, and are managed with an attention and diligence that preclude all delays and obstructions to the course of trade. The system of oolyum or forced labour, has been abrogated and the people are at liberty to direct their labour to their own advantage, which always includes that of the state. The supplies required for the Pagodas or the public temples are paid for at equitable prices. The most zealous precautions have been adopted to ensure the personal liberty of the people and security of their property, formerly at the mercy of capricious and nearly irresponsible public servants. The dominion of the laws hitherto unknown, and the means of legal protection and redress have been established. The Courts not only determine controversies among the people: but prevent oppression and transgression of the laws by the public authorities. They have full power to summon before them any person accused of injustice: and also to send for any prisoner within their jurisdiction, and order his release of unlawfully confined. The proceedings of the Courts have contributed to diffuse among the people a general knowledge of their just rights and confidence to maintain them against injury and oppression. The revenue consolidated under a few principal heads is in general collected with facility, is in no case burdensome to the people, is greater in its amount than was ever before collected in Travancore, and will continue to increase with the prosperity of the country. Notwithstanding the concessions to the people to the extent of 8 lacs of Rupees, the revenue has been augmented within the last

ten years from 30 to 38 lacs, affording a clear surplus of about 8 lacs,a part of this amount is applied to internal inprovement, the repairs of water courses and religious edifices, the formation of roads &ca. The authority and dignity of the Rajah have been carefully supported: the most marked deference and respect have been manifested towards all the branches of the reigning family, and they have evinced their gratitude by an uniform attention to the advice of the Resident, and the wishes of the British Government. They have studied by every means in their power to gain the approbation and friendship of the Company. I regret that I must leave Travancore with an unfavourable opinion of the words and principles of the people but the extreme respect which they have shown to the British Resident, and the eagerness with which they press to him for advice, protection and redress shew that they look up to the British Government for the security of their rights, and I trust under its mild and equitable influence that justice, clemency, and order will continue to prevail, and the character of the people be raised from the unnatural state of depression to which it was reduced by a long course of tyranny and crimes. The attainments of these desirable and salutary ends will depend in a primary degree upon the Resident's vigilance. The natural tendency and bias of the Government leads to cruelty and oppression, and this must be counteracted by the moderate and wise, but vigilant firm and unremitting exertion of the Resident's influence, and Counsels. On this depends in a great degree the efficiency of the whole system. The Rajah enters minutely into the deatils of business, a practice highly useful, but unless the Resident watches with unceasing attention, the daily complexion and progress of events, the affairs will assuredly deteriorate. The people know perfectly well that the natural character of their own Government is tyranny and corruption, that of the British influence. justice and moderation, and they will look up to Resident's ascendancy for a correction of the evils to which they would in its absence be exposed. Admitting that they are attached to their Rajah and their country they are attached also to their own safety, interests, and happiness and they will desire the continuance of a system by which these are secured without compromising the essential rights of their sovereign among the natives of Travancore, the British influence has no enemies excepting those men who are enemies of the peace, welfare, and prosperity of their country. From these men the Resident will experience as I have experienced abundant vexations: but from the mass of the people he will receive constant testimonies of attachment and respect.

I beg permission in concluding this report, to solicit the attention of the Government to the revenue statements, which accompany it. The

statement No.4, in particular showing the concessions made to the people will demonstrate at once the extent of the relief that, has been afforded to them, and the statement No.5 evinces the progressive increase of resources that has resulted from the abrogation of an oppressive system of taxation and Government.

I have & ca
(Signed) J. Munro
Resident

Travancore, Nagercoil,
7th March 1818

Statement shewing the Revenue Estimate and collections in Travancore, together with the payments into the Company's Treasury during the four years while the affairs of that country principally by the Resident.

Years	*Revenue Estimates*	*Collections*	*Paid into the Company's Treasury*		*Total*
			Current subsidy	*Debt*	
986 partly under the Resident	3014110	2910893	823721	316814	1140535
987 entirely under the Resident	3412879	3567521	823721	775332	1599053
988 entirely under the Resident	3568520	3411331	823721	427225	1250946
989 partly under the Resident	3649615	3614509	823721	344583	1168304
TOTAL	13645224	13504254	3294884	1863954	5158838

Sd/- J. Munro,
Travancore, 7th March 1818

Note: There is a small difference between the above Rupees and the exact Rupees.

Statement No. IV

Statement shewing the taxes, monopolies, and other oppressive imposts, that has been abolished in Travancore by order of Her Highness the Raunee at the recommendation of the Resident, also shewing the amount of Revenue that had been usually realized from these sources.

	Amount of Revenue as collected in 983 or 1807/8 Rs.	Pags	Vees
Poorshandrum, Preachettum, or fines and taxes, or inheritance &ca. abolished by proclamation	154580	1	73
Kurreekanum or nuzzers collected from the inhabitants, suppressed by the orders of the Raunee	6608	2	85
Maleara or an additional assessment on particular kinds of cultivation suppressed by order of the Raunee	2355	—	—
Yateootee and arkamud–an arbitrary assessment levied from Oottoo laws suppressed by order of the Raunee	4225	2	66
Vellavasee - aravasee, profit realized by the Circar, from the excess in the measurement of grain discontinued by the introduction of a money rent	79972	3	51
Trimuss shunct a nuzzar collected from the public servants and inhabitants on every anniversary of the last Rajah's death suppressed by order of the Raunee	20513	3	32
Duties collected on grain and fruits abolished by proclamation	15337	3	81
Contract for the exclusive sale of cotton abolished by proclamation	46492	0	71

	Rs.	Pags	Vees
Contract for the exclusive sale of uncleansed cotton abolished by proclamation	9292	1	28
Monopoly of Turmeric abolished by proclamation	5273	—	28
Monopoly of hill articles abolished by proclamation	4142	3	43
Monopoly of sharkfins and shells abolished by ditto	1400	—	—
River contracts abolished by ditto	65545	2	28
Betel-nut monopoly abolished by ditto	350205	2	51
Monopoly of Munjul ditto ditto	1242	—	—
Ditto of Ginger ditto ditto	29655	—	14
Ditto of Coir rope ditto ditto	40822	2	65
Profits realized at the commercial stations from the retail of goods	19209	2	71
Subsidy from Cochin	6409	—	71
Shettoo pautum or tax levied on all taxes from which toddy was drawn	18523	2	51
Poll–tax on Shanars and Elwars	88044	1	—
Poll–tax on Chetties and several other castes	4624	3	6
Tax on the manufacture of arrack	928	2	28
Total revenue relinquished	975405	2	89

Sd/ J. Munro
Travancore, 7th March, 1818.

STATEMENT No. 5

Statement shewing the increase in the several departments of Revenue in Travancore effected by the regulations introduced under the direction of the Resident while he administered —THE AFFAIRS OF THAT STATE—

		Increase of Revenue		
		Rs.	Pags	Vees
Revenues of the Devastanum lands and gardens transferred to the Circar	...	365161	2	55
Difference between the former remissions for uncultivated lands and bad crops, and the fixed abatement of 20 and 30 percent established by the Resident.	...	206927	,,	97
Militia tenures resumed	...	14995	1	42
Increase of revenue arising on a detailed inspection of accounts from escheats to the Rajah and other items concealed and appropriated by the revenue servants.	...	37728	1	96
Increase in the revenue of Porayedums or Plantations on a general survey.	...	126004	2	57
Tax imposed upon the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors assumed at 50,000 Rupees although it will probably exceed a lac.	...	50,000	,,	,,
Increase in the land revenue of Shencotta on a land survey and detailed inspection of accounts.	...	20822	3	32
Customs	...	84379	1	25
Increase in the sale of tobacco	...	620902	,,	86
Salt, increased revenue	...	187586	2	71
Bazars of Quilon profit	...	11132	2	29
Sale of timber	...	158317	2	58
Fines, fees & ca levied under authority of the courts of justice	...	64583	1	29
Total increase of revenue		1928541	3	76

Travancore
7th March 1818

/Signed/ J. Munro
Resident

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